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BAPTISMA:  
THE  
MODE AND SUBJECTS  
OF  
CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

BY J. LATHERN.

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THIRD EDITION.

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"THE DOCTRINE OF BAPTISMS."—*St. Paul.*

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HALIFAX, N. S.—REV. DR. PICKARD.

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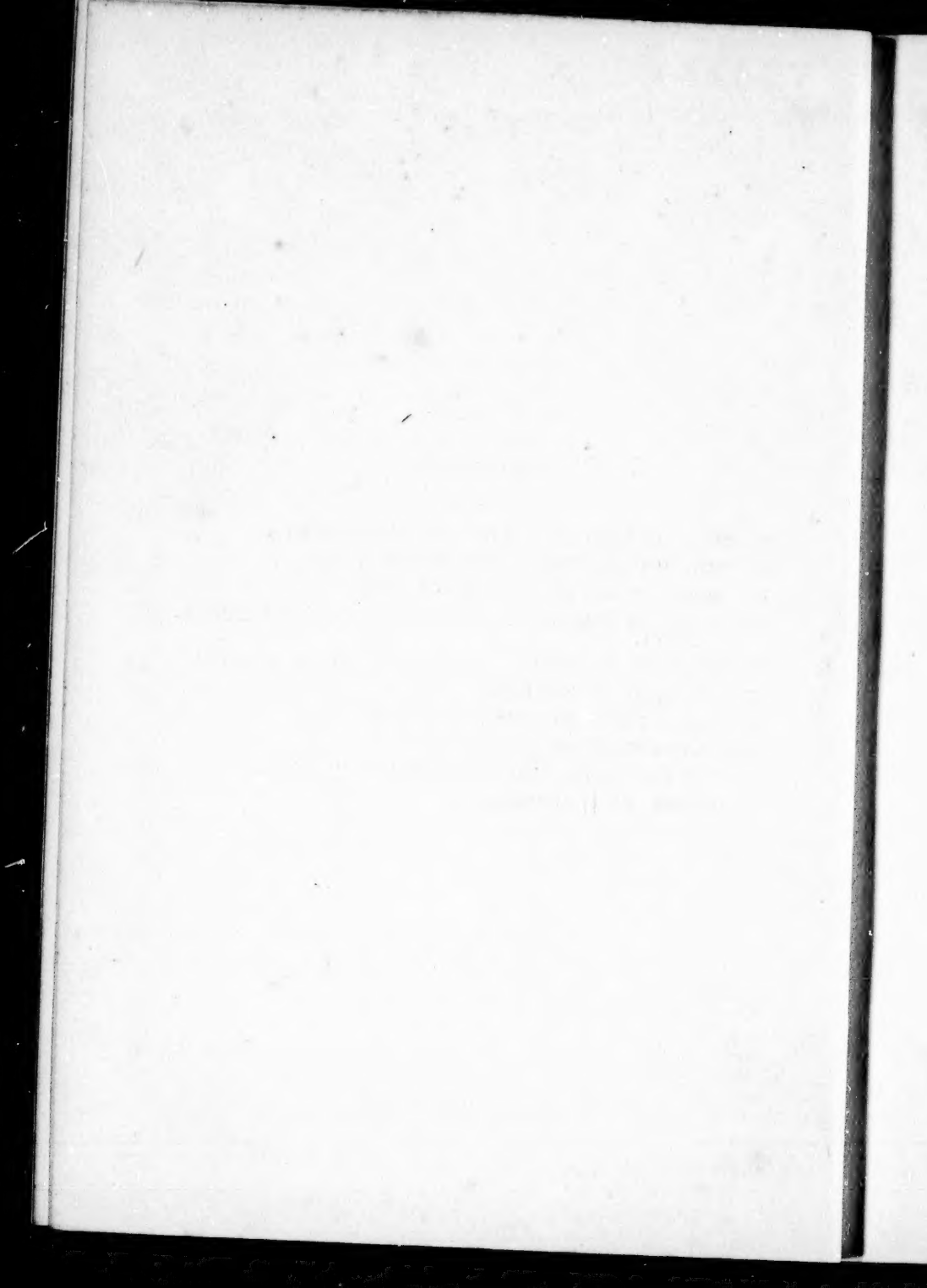
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## PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION.

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The volume, whatever its value may be, will be found to contain chiefly the results of independent investigation.

Through several of the earlier chapters, in this examination of the ordinance and administration of Christian Baptism, there has been presented, in consecutive and formulated view, the *positive* teachings of God's word: "To the law and to the testimony" must be the first and also the final appeal.

It has been the usual practice, in treatises of this class, to deal with the question of the subjects of Baptism—involving that of the *Moral Status* of children—in a second or separate part; but, in the present case, for continuity of inspired idea, as part of the main scriptural argument, it has been deemed expedient that this part of the discussion should immediately follow that of positive teaching in regard to mode.

Citation, disquisition, the examination of authorities, and other matters belonging to the more general literature, which has originated with the question of Mode of Baptism, have been reserved for later chapters.

As baptismal questions are varied, of necessity grouped, and frequently controverted, the conditions of *structural* arrangement are considerably complicated. With the hope that *Baptisma* may for the present supply the place of Hand Book to students, not having access to more exhaustive works on the subject, and for the sake of lucid presentation and facility of reference, the several chapters have been distributed into *sections*.

The aim has been, throughout the discussion of this subject, to secure as much of definiteness and *conclusiveness* as was compatible, with an easy and attractive *style*.

Oct. 1879.

J. L.

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."—Matt. iii. 11.

"For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."—Acts i. 5.

"Three that bear witness in earth."—John v. 8.

"And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children."—Acts ii: 38, 39.

"Having first stated the *insignificance* of his own baptism, he proceeds to the baptism ordained by Christ, which was replete with an *ineffable* gift."—Chrysostom.

"But *mine opinion* unto all the world, that the *Scriptures solely*, and the *Apostles' Church*, is to be followed, and no *man's authority*, be he Augustine, Tertullian, or even Cherubim or Seraphim."—Bishop Hooper.

"My apology is, that I judged the argument could be placed in a better light than that in which it is generally found in treatises on the Mode of Baptism; besides several important points have not been duly noticed in any work that has come under my observation."—Dr. Hibbard.

# BAPTISMA.

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## CHAPTER I.

### MODE OF BAPTISM: THE OLD TESTAMENT.

*"And sprinkled both the book and all the people."—Hebrews.*

*"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean."—Ezekiel.*

*"So shall He sprinkle many nations."—Isaiah.*

*"The Bible is its own dictionary; the spirit of God His own interpreter."—Dr. Whedon.*

In Beethoven's matchless symphonies one grand idea is wrought out through all variations and vibrations of measure and of melody. It is intimated in the prelude, whispered softly in the treble, murmured in the bass, becomes clearer and fuller as the composition and rendering advance, rises and rolls into magnificent chorus; and then, gradually, in the same rich and varied strain, winds back to the sweetness, as of lute melody, and the whole closes in triumphant harmony.

In the anthem-strain of Revelation we have the mingling of varied minstrelsy:

*"It hath a voice high and clear,  
From the lips of heaven-taught seer,  
From harp of Zion that charms the ear,  
From the choir where seraph minstrels glow."*

But may we not, in the noble compositions of inspiration, look for chord and consonance, and that superb

unity of idea which constitute the charm and the crowning glory of human effort and achievement? Through all changes, in *minor* melody and in mighty majestic chorus, the harmony will be unbroken. The varied voices of all consecrated signs and symbols, of promise, prophecy and appointed ordinance, will meet and blend, "as lute to lute" into perfect unison. In the absolute perfection of inspired truth there will be no solitary discord. The emblems and symbols consecrated to God, and to the things of God, will harmonize with each other and above all they will be in exact accord and complete correspondence with that which they are intended to signify and represent. The outward and visible, we are told, is but the type and counterpart of that which is unseen and spiritual. Earth is

"But the shadow of heaven and things therein,  
*Each to other like, more than on earth is taught.*"

Turning to the "Oracles of God," for the purpose of ascertaining the mind of the spirit, in reference to the subject of Baptism, we may hear the voice of God, authoritatively speaking upon this matter, as upon others of more or less importance, and there is a marvellous clearness of utterance. The *refrain* cannot be mistaken. Evangelical promise supplies the prelude. Through all changes of prophetic teaching and of religious observance the same idea is sustained. The grand climax, the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire, we have in the magnificent inaugural of Pentecost. Evangelists and Apostles touch the theme with accordant voice; and, in their most distinctive allusions, especially in the "different baptisms," and the baptism of "cloud" and "sea," we have but the resonance of ancient fact and form.

## I. EVANGELICAL PROMISE.—THE PRELUDE.

The prelude, of the universal and unbroken strain of inspired teaching, we have in glorious evangelical promise—the idea and imagery of which, by natural transition and blessed accomplishment, have passed into christianity: “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you, &c.”

“The spirit signified by the water,” says the eloquent exponent of the “Tongue of Fire,” is *never once promised under the idea of dipping*. Such an expression as, “I will immerse you in my spirit,” “I will plunge you in my spirit,” “I will dip you in clean water,” is unknown to the scripture. But “I will pour out my spirit upon you,” “I will sprinkle clean water upon you,” is language and thought familiar to all readers of the Bible.

Between this grand and glorious promise, the most comprehensive, perhaps, in the whole range of inspired prophecy, appropriated, by incontestable authority, as the heritage of the Christian Church, and the ordinance of baptism there is a very close and striking parallel. The promise refers to the Holy Spirit and so prominently does baptism. The promise is associated with the renewal of the heart and baptism has a like significance. The promise is symbolical and baptism is emblematical. The promise has external allusion and special spiritual blessing; and baptism has the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. The promise comprehends water symbolism and water is the element of baptism. There is *mode* likewise specified, that of *affu-*

sion; and consistency demands adoption of the same mode in the administration of Christian baptism.

The great saving sanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit of God are represented as the sprinkling of clean water. And, if the *modus operandi* of the work of the Holy Ghost, in the salvation and sanctification of the soul, can justify the phraseology of the great evangelical promise, surely the outward sign, the application of water in baptism, ought to *correspond* with the inward and spiritual grace. Then as candidates for admission to the church present themselves for baptism, and as suitable subjects are in faith and prayer dedicated to God, with the assurance that of such is the Kingdom of God, prayer may in confidence be offered that, simultaneously with the application of water, the promise may receive its full accomplishment: *I will sprinkle clean water and ye shall be clean.*

## II. DIFFERENT BAPTISMS.

The *mode*, indicated in the prophetic promise, is in harmony with appointed and established *ordinances* and institutions of the Old Testament Church: and therefore it has been appropriately perpetuated and consecrated in the administration of Christian baptism.

The various purifications and ceremonial ablutions, of the Old Testament, were doubtless the foundation of the baptism of the proselytes,—for which there was no other authority in the word of God,—which indisputably, according to Rabinical testimony, was the established usage, and which accounts for the general familiarity with the rite of baptism everywhere apparent and assumed throughout the Gospel.

It is evident from the *wisdom of Sirach xxxi, 25:*



"When one is *baptized from a dead body—baptizomenos apo nekrou*—and touches it again," of what avail is *his washing—tō loutrō*. Unquestionably the writer, accustomed to legal ablutions, writing the Greek language in much the same diction as that of the New Testament, speaks of ceremonial cleansing as a baptism.

Can we, by any means ascertain the mode of ancient ablutions appointed by God? Was there any thing of definiteness of teaching in regard to legal purification? Is the *sprinkling* of water enjoined, or at all sanctioned in that early ritual?

Turning to the Pentateuch we find most minute and explicit requirement. It may be satisfactory, upon this point of vital importance, to reproduce all the leading passages.

The law of ceremonial purification from uncleanness by contact with dead bodies, spoken of as a baptism in the wisdom of Sirach, may be found in the nineteenth chapter of the Book of Numbers; "and for an unclean person they shall take the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification from sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel: and a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and *sprinkle* it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that toucheth a bone, or the slain, or the dead, or a grave; and the clean person shall *sprinkle* upon the unclean on the third day and upon the seventh day, and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water and shall be clean at even."

There was, it will be seen, in addition to legal official administration, washing and bathing, and in other pas-



sages shaving; but these were personal matters—purely of cleanliness. In such case there was no administrator; *and no specification of mode.* It must not be supposed that the bathings required were immersions. The explanation of these will be found in the supplementary notes. They were *not* of importance, however. But of such necessity was the “*sprinkling which sanctifieth :*” that whoever was not purified by this *mode* was put to death :—“ Whosoever toucheth the dead body of any man that is dead, and purifieth not himself, defileth the tabernacle of the Lord; and *that soul shall be cut off from Israel; because the water of separation was not sprinkled upon him, he shall be unclean; his uncleanness is yet upon him.*”

In the law of purification of leprosy, we have the same requirement: “ This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought unto the priest.” The priest was directed to take two birds, —one of which was to be “ killed in an earthen vessel over running water:” as for the living bird he shall take it and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water: and *he shall sprinkle upon him* that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and *shall pronounce him clean.*” There were subsequent shavings and washing of clothes; but the *sprinkling sanctified*; and the priest was commanded at once to *pronounce him clean.*

There was also, for houses tainted with leprosy, the same law of purification: “ And he shall take the cedar wood, and the hyssop, and the scarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird, and *in the running water, and sprinkle the house seven times: and*

*he shall cleanse the house."* Of course the house could not be *dipped* in water: the purification was by "sprinkling" of "clean water."

The Law for the purification of Levites, also, was specific. "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying: Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them. And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: *Sprinkle water of purifying upon them*, and let them shave their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean."

Turning to the inspired exposition of the ancient ritual, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, we are assured: that "*Sprinkling the unclean sanctified to the purifying of the flesh.*"

By authority, therefore, which cannot be disputed, this question has been determined. The inspired writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews was intimately acquainted with appointed rites of the ancient Church. He comprehended unquestionably the nature and design of Christian baptism. He was an accomplished scholar, master of Greek literature, and yet those purifications he collectively speaks of as: *diaphorais baptismois—different baptisms*—in the English text: "divers washings."

Here, then, we have not simple supposition. We have something more than inference. *We have positive authority.* In every application of water that *sanctified*, the mode was *sprinkling*; and the several purifications of which we have most minute explanation are specifically designated baptisms.

### III. PROPHETIC SYMBOLISM: SUBMERSION.

The prelude of inspired teaching upon this subject, has been supplied by evangelical promise: But what of

the general and uniform tone and tenor of prophetic utterance? Do inspired men, in the appropriation of imagery from WATER speak with distinctness and discrimination? Do they give any certain sound? Are they in accord with the ample sweep and scope of Scriptural teaching?

In the psalms and prophecies of the Old Testament, the imagery of water is frequently that of submersion, overflow, the rush of a whelming flood; and in all such passages there is a dominantly pervasive thought—that of *calamity*.

Turning to figurative scriptures, in which we find water alluded to as a flood, we have one constant and only uniform and continued idea. "For thus saith the Lord God when I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited, when I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and great *waters* shall cover thee." "Woe to the multitude of many people, which make a noise like the noise of the seas; and to the rushing of mighty *waters*!" "Thus saith the Lord; Behold *waters* rise up out of the North, and shall be an overflowing flood."—"Now, therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth upon them the *waters* of the river, strong and many, even the King of Assyria and all his glory; and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks: and he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he *shall reach even to the neck*."—"A destroying storm as the flood of mighty *waters*."—"Who is this that cometh up as a flood, whose waters are moved as the rivers? For he riseth up like a flood and his *waters* and he saith, All go up, and will cover the earth; I will *destroy* the city and the inhabitants thereof."—St. Peter, in allusion to the ark sprinkled by rain as a figure

of baptism, speaks in contrast of the judgments of God "bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly." There was immersion at the flood, but that was not a figure of baptism which saves.

"And the Lord God of Hosts," says the Prophet Isaiah, "is he that toucheth the land, and it shall melt, and all that dwell therein shall mourn; and it shall rise up wholly like a flood; and shall be drowned as by the flood of Egypt." The flood of Egypt could only suggest, in the most supreme and striking manner, the idea of calamity and of overwhelming disaster:—the hosts of Pharaoh, his horses and his chariots engulfed in the Red Sea. Take these passages, and others such as these,—what is the one uniform sustained idea? *It is evil and not good! It is calamity, and not blessing! It is destruction and not salvation!!*

#### IV. PROPHETIC SYMBOLISM : AFFUSION.

But then in the figurative language of the Psalms and Prophecies, in many metaphorical passages of the Old Testament, in which water is spoken of, the imagery is that of sprinkling—as the dew, "I will be as the dew unto Israel," and of pouring—as the rain: "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth."

A few such passages for illustrative purposes will be sufficient: "As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forever more."—"Then," says the prophet, "shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning: and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth."—"Thou

O God," says the Psalmist, in commemoration of national visitation, "didst send a plentiful *rain*, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary."—"Be glad then ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God; for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the *rain*, the former rain and the latter rain."—"My Doctrine shall drop as the *rain*, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass."—"Awake and *sing* ye that dwell in the dust; for thy *dew* is as the dew of herbs."—"I will pour *water* upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed and my blessing upon thine offspring." Passages—such as that of the memorable prediction in Malachi:—"If I will not open to you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing—do not positively include water-symbolism, except the general idea of copiousness, and cannot fairly be appealed to in this connection. There are numerous passages in which the promised blessing is set forth as "the dew of youth"—as "the dew of the morning"—as the *sprinkling* of water. The Apostle Peter, who in one Epistle speaks of the Flood as a revelation of judgment' writes in another Epistle of "the ark wherein a few, that is eight souls were saved by water: the like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us."—"Noah's Ark *floating* upon the water," says Dr. Clarke, "and *sprinkled by the rain from heaven* is figure corresponding to baptism."

One more passage, and only one, I need to quote from the figurative language of prophetic declaration: "And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down

in his season: *there shall be showers of blessing.*" What is the grand all-pervading idea of these promises and prophecies of the word of God? *Always good and never evil, always blessing and never calamity, always salvation and never destruction!* Would it not have been strange if, in the baptismal element of Christianity, the mode always suggestive of salvation had been set aside; and another mode, which in figurative teaching had always typified destruction, had been substituted? It would have been difficult, with our conceptions of the orderly arrangement of infinite wisdom, to have comprehended such an anomaly.

It is true that in utterances which are figurative, but which do not include *water*,—which do not therefore belong to this domain of inquiry,—in the outpouring of divine fury and indignation, we have the idea of calamity. But even there the idea of mode imperatively presses its claim, and determines the otherwise inexplicable rendering of Isaiah xxi. 4, in the Septuagint, "*Iniquity baptizes me; hē anomia me baptizei.*" The *pouring* out of judgment was the fearful baptism of iniquity.

The inquiry instituted, however, has purely and exclusively reference to prophetic imagery in which *water* is employed. The field of inquiry is broad and clear. The margin is wide. There was ample room for chance and choice of mode. Water, the visible emblem of baptism, was the symbol of inspired prophecy and enters into many of the most lofty and sublime of ancient predictions. The question is lifted from the sphere of petty, puny strife, up to the clear noontide light of straight and honorable investigation. Does submersion, in all that range of water imagery, symbolize evil? Has affusion the constant consecrated significance of salvation?

In the interests of truth, of supreme importance, and in the name of sober searching criticism, we submit that this appeal, to the broad decisive and uniform teachings of the Word of God, in relation to water symbolism—of close affinity and in perfect consonance with the main subject—the mode of application in the baptismal element—which therefore strikes home to the very heart of the subject, cannot be disposed of by quibble or mere evasion. If, in this exhibition of inspired teaching—of its spirit and scope—of the uniform tone and tenor of prophetic imagery, the sacred writers have been misunderstood and misrepresented, let *the argument vanish*.

If, in this comparison of scripture with scripture, the results have been stated fairly and with substantial accuracy: upon what principle or procedure of divine consistency, and of *unchanging* wisdom, are we to account for the fact—that a *mode*, always in ancient annals expressive of evil, should be perpetuated and that which had uniformly, in prophecy and promise, been symbolical and suggestive of salvation and blessing, should be abandoned and condemned?

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## CHAPTER II.

### MODE OF BAPTISM: JOHN THE BAPTIST.

“*Unto John's baptism.*”—*Acts*.

“*It cannot be certainly proved from Scripture that even John's (baptism) was performed by dipping.*—*Wesley*.

#### I. JOHN'S BAPTISM.

The *mode* of John's administration has been exhaustively discussed by controversial exponents of the baptismal rite. *John's baptism, however was not christian*

*baptism*—not of authoritative obligation in the Church of Christ—therefore it were a superfluity to press the inquiry beyond one phase of the subject.

Turning to the nineteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, we have *positive proof* of the insufficiency of the baptism of John—as a compliance with the initiatory rite of the Christian Church. “Paul having passed through the upper coasts,” says the inspired historian of the early Apostolic Church, “came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, *Unto John's baptism*. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe in him which should come after him, that is, in Christ Jesus. When they heard this *they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus*. And when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came upon them, etc.” The baptism of John was insufficient, and thus these twelve men were baptized into the faith of Christ, “in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

“In the whole compass of theological literature,” says the learned and luminous Baptist author, Robert Hall, aware that some had attempted to deny and explain away the significance of the historic record, “it would be difficult to assign a stronger instance, of the force of prejudice, in obscuring a plain matter of fact.” He denounces the unfair attempt as “violence to the language of Scripture.”

John's Baptism was not Christian Baptism; but his mission was one of divine appointment. “There was a



man sent from God whose name was John." His ministry was one of national preparation. When the Lord God came down amongst the people, at Sinai, they were required to sanctify themselves. A service of solemn ceremonial preparation was held. That covenant into which God then entered with the nation had its seal and its symbol: "For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people, according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, *with water*, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and *sprinkled* both the book *and all the people*." At the advent of Jesus, in whose sacrificial work all altar-offerings were to have their fulfilment, the only symbolical service which remained in John's ministry was the application of water. John baptized *with water*, and, from the fact that such an immense concourse thronged to his ministry, it is incredible that any other mode should have been practicable. "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan."

"Can any man suppose," inquires *Dr. Adam Clarke*, in his comment upon this passage, "that it was possible for John to dip *all the inhabitants of Judea and of all the country round about Jordan*? Were both men and women dipped, for certainly both came to his baptism? This never could have comported either with safety or decency. Were they dipped in their *clothes*? This would have endangered their lives if they had not with them a *change* of raiment: and as such baptism as John's was in several respects a new thing in Judea, it is not at all likely that the people would come thus provided. But suppose these were *dipped*, which I think it would be impossible to prove, does it follow that, in all regions of the world, men and women must be dipped in order

to be evangelically baptized?" "Such prodigious numbers," says *Wesley* in his *Notes*, "could hardly be baptized by immersing their whole bodies under water: nor can we think they were provided with change of raiment for it, which was scarcely practicable for such a vast multitude. And yet they could not be immersed naked with modesty, nor in their wearing apparel with safety. It seems, therefore, that they stood in ranks on the edge of the river, and that John passing along before them, cast water upon their heads or faces; by which means he might baptize many thousands in a day. And this way most strikingly signified Christ's baptizing them "with the Holy Ghost and with fire," which John spoke of as prefigured by his baptizing with water, and which was eminently fulfilled when the Holy Ghost sat upon the disciples in the appearance of tongues or flames of fire."

John baptized at the Jordan, and at other places—one of which was the wilderness. The mere fact of baptism at a river does not, as sometimes has been imagined and asserted, necessarily imply immersion. Analogous to the narrative of baptism at the Jordan was a custom connected with the solemnization of the "Elousinian mysteries." Those admitted into the lesser or introductory mysteries of Eleusis were previously purified, on the banks of the Illissus, by water being poured upon them by the Adranos." The candidates for admission to the "mysteries" went to the Athenian River. There was the *lustration*—purification by water; but there was no immersion.

John baptized in Enon, because there was (*hudata polla*—many springs) much water there. Was not the place selected by John, to whose ministry a great concourse of people gathered, for the same reason that the

travelling caravan seeks an encampment near some fountain at the present day? The children of Israel, in their march through the wilderness, "came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water, and three score and ten palm-trees; and they encamped there by the waters."

In the East Indies there is said to be a sect calling themselves the "disciples of John the Baptist," who annually repeat and reiterate the service of baptism. "They proceed in a body," says Norberg, as quoted by a late writer, "to the water, and among them one bears a standard; also, the priest dressed in his camel's hair ornament, holding a vessel of water in his hand, he sprinkles each person as he singly comes out of the river."

## II. THE SAVIOUR AND JOHN'S BAPTISM.

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him." The fact of the Saviour's compliance with an appointed ordinance of national purification, just as he went up to the annual Feasts and complied with other requirements of rite and ritual and established institutions of religion,—has been made the subject of frequent and urgent appeal, plausibly presented, and to imperfectly instructed converts more potent than argument, to "follow the blessed Saviour." Was the baptism of Jesus in a *literal* sense an example for his people?

It is well that piety should rest upon an *intelligent* basis. The most strenuous advocates for following the Saviour literally, do not act out their profession. "Ye call me master and Lord;" said Jesus, on the eve of his passion, "for so I am. If I then your Lord and master have washed your feet: ye also ought to wash one ano-

ther's feet. For I have given you an *example*, that ye should do as I have done unto you." If following Jesus implies literal compliance with his example and teachings, then the oriental washing of feet ought to be perpetuated through all time and in all lands. The Saviour was not baptized until he was thirty years of age. Must obedience in our case be deferred? In the Gospel of Luke, we learn "when *all the people were baptized*, it came to pass that Jesus also being baptized:—He was not with the first applicants,—the baptism of Jesus was at the close: must we linger and wait, and, instead of leading the way, seek to fall in the last place. We can surely adopt a more rational and more consistent principle of exegesis. The Saviour was the sinless one. He was separate from sinners. Upon an ass, "whereon never man yet sat," he made his public entry into Jerusalem; and he was buried in a new sepulchre, "wherein was never man yet laid." In his baptism also there was a sacred sense in which Jesus was *alone*. The distinction was well understood by the Baptist: "John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? But Jesus answering said unto him: Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. *Then he suffered him.*" The righteousness of every dispensation of the law and the prophets, and, that there might be no defect in obedience of John's ministry, the Saviour was pledged to fulfil: But can we be baptized with the baptism that he was baptized with?

The baptism of Jesus incidentally illustrates *mode*. It is in perfect consonance with the tenor of Scriptural teaching "and Jesus when He was baptized went up straightway out of the water." The preposition *apo*

"out of," being the same as in the previous verse, "from" *apo* "the wrath to come," would be correctly rendered in this passage "from the water" and it decides nothing; but the descent of the spirit has been minutely described. "The Spirit of God like a dove"—the pure luminous *baptismal* symbol—not suggestive, as in immersion, of passive inert element acted upon—*descended and lighted upon him*.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### MODE OF BAPTISM: **WITH** WATER—A VINDICATION.

"*I indeed baptize you with water*"—*John*.

"*For John truly baptized with water.*"—*Acts*.

"*Mit wasser : with water.*"—*Luther's Vers*.

"*Not by water only.*"—*St. John*.

John testified: "I indeed baptize you *with water*." The accuracy of this rendering has been challenged. It may be sufficient at this stage to read a passage from Ezekiel:—

"Then I washed thee *with water*; yea, I thoroughly washed away the blood from thee, and I anointed thee *with oil*."

The construction in this case, and the use of the preposition, are exactly the same in each clause. If it demands the force of *into* the water, then *immersion into oil* must follow by the same law.

"Baptism *with water*," the phrase of John the Baptist, in this testimony, carries with it the force of instru-

mentality, and implies, therefore, the application of the baptismal element to the subject. It has been claimed, in discussion upon this question, that the words in the Greek text: *en hudati*, ought to have been rendered in water. The preposition in this connection however governs the dative of the instrument, and has been rendered in our version with propriety and with grammatical accuracy. Sometimes the preposition, *en*, governs the dative of locality—as in Matthew, the first verse of the second chapter: *en Bethleem*, in Bethlehem. The preposition also in other passages governs the dative of time—as in the fifteenth verse of the tenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel: *en hēmera kriseos*, in the day of judgment. Very frequently, however, as in the passage under consideration, the Greek preposition governs the dative of instrumentality. We have good example of this in 1 Cor. iv. 21: *en rhabdo eltho pros humas*, am I to come to you with a rod? We have in Luke xxii, 49: *en machaira*, with the sword. The difference between the dative of locality, and that of time and of instrumentality will be sufficiently obvious to any inquirer. The appeal for the rendering in contention must be, from the nature of the case, chiefly to the Greek of the New Testament.

The law of literal usage and of primary signification must be, of necessity, modified and governed by the higher law of dominant and imperious Fact.

"The language of the New Testament," says Professor Robinson, the Lexicographer, "is the later Greek language, as spoken by foreigners of the Hebrew stock, and applied by them to subjects in which it never had been employed by native Greek writers. The simple statement of fact suggests at once what the character of the idiom

must be; and might, one would think, have saved volumes of controversy." The fact thus emphatically stated, fundamental in its character, applicable especially to the phrase in question, because of the influence of the Septuagint rendering of the Hebrew preposition—supplies a canon of criticism which, through every step of this investigation, will be found of incalculable value.

The paragraph, claiming and contending for the accuracy of the rendering "with water," as originally published, has not been invalidated by eager opponents, and without scar or scathe, has safely run the gauntlet of more than one column of criticism. It may be expedient, however, that a matter of essential interest and importance should receive fuller elucidation.

The unexceptionable testimony of Apostles may be adduced in evidence and illustration of New Testament construction. The gospel of St. Matthew comes first in order :

"If the salt have lost his savor, *wherewith*," *en*, by what application shall it be salted."—Matt. 5, 13.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God *with*," *en*, all thy heart, and *with*," *en*, all thy soul, and *with*," *en*, all thy mind."—*En holé kardia sou, kai en holé te psuche sou, kai en holé té dianoia sou.*—Matt. 22, 37.

"Then he that had received five talents went and traded *with*," *en*, the same."—Matt. 25, 16.

St. Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ, was an accurate and accomplished master of Greek language and literature : Do his Epistles afford any example of this rendering ? Take one Epistle : "If thou shalt confess *with*," *en*, thy mouth the Lord Jesus."—Rom. 10, 9.

"Overcome evil *with, en, good*:"—*nika en tò agathà to kakon*.—Rom. 12, 21.

"Salute one another *with* an holy kiss:" *en philēmati hagiō*.—Rom. 16, 16.

The competent testimony of St. John may, so far as witnesses are concerned, close the case.

"For thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God *by, en or with, Thy blood*."—Rev. 5, 9.

"To kill *with, en, sword and with, en, hunger and with, en, death*."—Rev. 6, 8.

"He that killeth *with, en*, must be killed *with, en*, the sword."—Rev. 13, 10.

Would it be contended that the forms of expression "with salt," "with the sword," "with the heart," "with the mouth," "with hunger," "with an holy kiss," sanction, and of necessity imply, *into* in the *modal* sense of immersion?

Three passages have been quoted from three sections of the New Testament: Gospel, Epistle and Apocalypse. Three Apostles, St. Matthew, St. Paul and St. John have furnished testimony; and "in the mouth of two or three witnesses, may every word be established." Continued inquiry may assume somewhat the appearance of a work of supererogation; but the question opens the way into comparatively a new and, as far as my acquaintance with the subject extends, untracked field of inquiry. It is expedient therefore that the investigation be conducted to thorough and satisfying result.

Examples of classic usage have been cited from Conant, the chief Baptist author, for the purpose of invalidating argument: established by authority and evidence the most apposite and irrefragable.



In the writings of Basil the *en* occurs in the passage: "Steel *baptized with the fire; en to puri*, kindled up by the spirit (wind)." The quotation, from the author referred to, has of course the rendering, "immersed in the fire."

But does the *en*, even in this proof passage from Basil, *dip* the steel, or *plunge* the steel or *immerse* the steel? The smith at the forge *thrusts* the steel into the fire; but that is not Basil's baptism. The action of the workman is followed by an action, or effect of wind and flame; and that is baptism. An important signification of *en* is locality—"rest in a place," as *Valpy* in his Greek grammar phrases it, and the steel, at rest in the furnace, was acted upon by wind and fire—by blast and fierce flame—the action and effect, one or both, constituted the baptism. A tolerably good example that of Basil of the signification of *en*, denoting *with*, the dative of the instrument, and in consonance with scriptural examples.

Another passage, depended upon to break the force of cumulative proof, in evidence of *with*, upon which great stress has been placed, is also from Conant: "but I in the waves of the sea immersing." The Greek text: *Ego de se kumasi ponton baptizon*, would be legitimately rendered: "but I *with* the waves of the sea baptising."

The action indicated clearly is not that of the application of a person to passive, inert *element*, but that of the *element*—the waves of the sea scattered and broken into *foam and spray*—applied to the person.

Kuhner, the eminent German scholar, of the very highest authority as a Greek grammarian, consulted at this point, because easy accessible, gives as the very first illustration of *En*, with the dative of instrument:

*Horan, horasthai. en ophthalmois*—"to see, be seen *with* the eyes." It would require considerable ingenuity to work out the idea of *into* or of immersion, from an expression such as this: *en ophthalmois*—"with the eyes." \*

Turning to the copious grammar of *Matthiæ*, by Bloomfield, a standard of reference in all questions of Greek philology and criticism, we find that "the Greek dative also supplies the place of the Latin ablative; and, in this case, expresses relationship of the connection or companionship to the question *where-with?* of an instrument or means to the question *whereby?*" From Homer, Euripides and other classics, passages are cited to shew that "sometimes, instead of the simple dative, propositions as *en*, are used."

The appeal cannot, however, be legitimately made to classic usage. The idiom and structure of New Testament Greek, as all scholars know, and the preposition *en* eminently and exactly exemplifies and illustrates the principle and position in contention, take their caste and coloring from the Hebrew and Septuagint version of the Hebrew books.

The testimony of the New Testament writers, inspired of God, will abundantly suffice; and walking in the light of sacred teaching, we shall be less likely, amidst the intricacies and niceties of abstract philological investigation, to lose the golden thread of thought and truth.

Two things in regard to the New Testament use of *En*, are clear and conclusive:

1. That the preposition *en*, governing the dative of locality, denoting "*rest in a place*," means what we express by the word *at*.

\* See on page 179.

The people were baptized by John, *en to Jordane*, "at the Jordan." John also baptized, *en té erémo*, "at the desert," encampment not *under* the desert sand. He baptized beyond Jordan, *en "at" ethabara*. The preposition is not only used in baptismal passages, but in other narratives: "Jesus was born, *en Bethleem*, at Bethleem"—"upon whom the tower, *en Siloam*, at Siloam, fell."—"It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, *hos kai estin en dexia tou Theou*, who is even at the right hand of God."

2. That the preposition *En*, governing, as in the passage chiefly under consideration, the *dative of the instrument* cannot, with precision or propriety, be translated, except by *with*.

Examples of this meaning, in addition to those previously given, may be found Luke 1, 51. "He hath shewed strength, *en brachioni hautou*, with his arm;" Luke 22, 49. "Shall we smite, *en Machaira*, with the sword; Gen. 48, 22—*with, en*, my sword and *with, en*, my bow."—Vers. LXX.; Ezekiel 16, 9. "Then I washed thee *with* water; \* \* \* and I anointed thee with oil." Turning to the Septuagint, we have the reading: *kai elousa se en hudati, kai echrisa se en elaiō*.

But for example we need only the passage in question; the testimony of John, "*I indeed baptize you with water, &c.*" Matt. iii. 11. The authorized version has been determined by a sound canon of philological criticism,—the distinction between *place and instrument* which the dative imperatively demands.

The rendering, in this and in the other Gospels, becomes more evident and assured, because it, *alone*, can be consistently and legitimately carried through the passage: "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost,

and with fire." *Autos humas baptisei en pneumati hagiō kai puri.* Read that important passage once again: *He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with Fire!* Read it in the full clear noontide light of Pentecostal fact and magnificent accomplishment! "*If en hudati*" must be "into water;" *en pneumati hagiō kai puri* must therefore be *into* the Holy Ghost, *into* the fire. But the Holy Ghost *fell* on them, and the fire *sat* upon each brow. Therefore *en* cannot be translated *into* except in defiance of authenticated historic fact.

The vital importance of this expression may be inferred from the fact that by all the Evangelists, and in the Acts of the Apostles, it has been solemnly recorded. The utterance is not obscure, indefinite and uncertain. It is repeated and reiterated, clear and legible, as if inscribed in characters of flame. From the lips of John the Baptist the testimony was taken up by the four Evangelists. The Gospel of John, the last portion, probably, of the sacred canon, bears witness:—

"He that sent me to baptize *with, en*, water, the same said unto me, upon whom thou shall see the Spirit *descending* and remaining on him, the same is He which baptizeth thee *with, en*, the Holy Ghost."

Amongst the very last words of Jesus, *before* ascending to His mediatorial throne, was the assurance, "John baptized *with, en*, water, but ye shall be baptized *with, en*, the Holy Ghost." Ten times in the Gospels and Acts, we have the same emphatic and sublime expression. In Luke iii, 16, we have *hudati baptizo*; and in one other place, which only adds to the fitness and force of the rendering, we have the dative without the preposition. Special stress, in a slenderly sustained argument, might

be placed upon the nude dative; but the advantage is not pressed. The appeal made is to the frequent and familiar form of the authorized version. It could not have been mere accident, or any want of scholarly precision, that the venerable translators, amongst them the most learned men of their time, uniformly rendered *en hudati* and *en pneumati* "with water" and "with the Holy Ghost."

The baptism spoken of and promised in all these passages, comprises a three fold application: *with water with the Holy Ghost*, and *with fire*. The instrument in each case has been indicated. The *en pneumati* cannot in this connection mean *into*.

We do not need any vindication of our version, "I indeed baptize you *with water*," except what the structure of parallel passages clearly exemplifies. This rendering is not only grammatically correct, but it is that which, carried through the passage, harmonizes with the historic facts of Pentecostal baptism; *with the Holy Ghost* and *with fire*. It is both good grammar and sound sense; but *dipping with water*, a rendering for which some strenuously contend, would carry the passage at once into the region of sheer absurdity.

The argument, clear and conclusive as it may have been up to this point, finds its culminating force, however, in the theological significance of the rendering in question. The Holy Ghost, the third Person in the glorious Trinity, cannot fitly be represented as passive essence or *inert* substance. The personality, office and work of the Holy Spirit have been distinctly revealed. As a divine agent, proceeding from the Father and the Son, He is ever actively engaged in applying to believing ones the benefits and blessings of a purchased salvation:

"His work completes the great design,  
And fills the soul with joy divine."

Thus grammatical sense, historic fact, and theological signification constitute a perfect vindication of the authorized version\*.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

#### MODE OF BAPTISM: PENTECOST AND THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

*"Replete with an ineffable gift."—Chrysostom.*

*"Every one shall see that verily the Spirit is poured out like water, and the rains are descending from above."—C. H. Spurgeon.*

*"Conceive the outburst of that burning moment: Body, Soul, and Spirit, glowing with one celestial fire."—Wm Arthur.*

We have, in the descent of the Spirit at PENTECOST, an irrefutable and irresistible argument in favor of *affusion*. The subject admits of positive proof. The demonstration is just as complete as the force of language and the well authenticated facts of history, by possibility, can make it.

##### I. INSPIRED RECORD.

It may be satisfactory exhibition, of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, to gather and to group into one view

\* *Vide* page 181.

the facts and statements of the inspired record. First, we have the promise of the Father: "ye shall be baptized *with* the Holy Ghost not many days hence." The baptism was near at hand. It was calculated to awaken expectation: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come *upon* you." When the day of Pentecost was fully come the promised gift was received. "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost," "This," said the Apostle Peter, with wondrous illumination, is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, *I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh.*" "Having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath *shed forth* this which ye now see and hear." The Apostles Peter and John, prayed for the Samaritan converts that they might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost: for as yet "He *was fallen upon* none of them." "While Peter spake these words," in the House of Cornelius," the Holy Ghost *fell* on all them that heard the word. And they of the circumcision were astonished; because that on the Gentiles also was *poured out* the gift of the Holy Ghost." "As I began to speak," said St. Peter, in a subsequent account before the Council of the Church, "the Holy Ghost *fell* on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord: ye shall be *baptized with* the Holy Ghost." Was the Apostle Peter at fault in remembering that the *outpouring* was the *baptism* of the Holy Ghost? The question at this point is purely one of *MODE*. The narrative is clear and decisive up to the very utmost measure and capacity of human speech. To prevent possibility of mistake there was the accompanying symbol, a *visible* baptismal element. Historic fact determines the New Testament

meaning of *Baptize*. What does the main fact of Pentecost teach in relation to mode? In what manner? The answer is explicit and the demonstration conclusive. The Holy Ghost was not passive and *inert*, but an active agent, in that baptism. The disciples were not *plunged* into personality, *substance*, element, sound as of wind or the likeness as of fire. *The mode of contact, in that baptism of God, between the persons baptized and that with which they were baptized was affusion.* "Till better authority be produced," says Dr. Wardlaw, with special reference to St. Peter's affirmation, that the baptism of the Holy Ghost was a *pouring out*, "I desire to bow to this; and, when Peter himself tells me that he *did* consider *affusion* as *baptism*, it is not the learning of all the Etymologists in Europe, that will persuade me against his own word, that it was impossible he should."

## II. CONSONANCE OF MODE.

"When we know how Christ baptized with the Holy Ghost, we know how John baptized with water. For he declared he was doing with water what Christ should do with the Holy Ghost: 'I baptize; He shall baptize.' When Christ baptized with the Holy Ghost, as we have seen, He shed forth the Holy Ghost; He poured out the Holy Ghost; He sent the Holy Ghost upon them; the Holy Ghost fell upon them. When John did the same thing with water—when he baptized, he shed forth water; he poured out the water; he sent the water upon them; the water fell on them. When Peter said: 'He hath shed forth this,' did he mean he hath immersed in this which ye see and hear? When Christ said: 'Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you,' did he mean, 'I will immerse you in the promise of my father?' When God said: 'I will pour out my spirit upon all



flesh,' did He mean that He would immerse all flesh in his Spirit? When Peter said: 'The Holy Ghost fell on them,' did he mean to say, 'When I began to speak, they were immersed in the Holy Ghost as we were at the beginning? *Immersion is not administered by pouring or shedding—baptism was.* If to baptize be a specific term, always meaning one and the same act, that act is to pour out, to shed forth as the Word of God is true. If it be a *generic* term, signifying the thing done—as to purify—without reference to the manner of doing it, then the mode is fixed by other terms—as to pour out, to shed forth, to send upon, &c. Whether it be specific or generic, the doctrine of immersion utterly fails."

### III. PENTECOST: AUDIBLE SIGN.

In promise, prophecy, and ancient ordinance, in consecrated symbol and inspired imagery, we have found, upon this subject, distinct and definite utterance. It is only, however, when we reach the sublimity and magnificence of Pentecostal inaugural, the promised *baptism of God*, a scene of simple, but of absolutely unparalleled grandeur, that symbol and substance, voices and testimonies meet and culminate; and, as in the roll of a mighty chorus, the full strength and deep significance of authoritative teaching breaks in upon the ear of the hushed, waiting, fire-crowned church: "and suddenly there came a *sound* from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and *it* filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat *upon* them."

The baptism of the Holy Ghost, the narrative of which can never lose its unique interest and importance, which we can never peruse without a fresh thrill, was

accompanied by an *audible sign*—"a sound as of a mighty rushing wind." It was not wind; but only something which mysteriously resembled it—"as of, *hosper*,"—like unto wind. Affinity and analogy find decisive expression in the correspondence between the sign and the person signified: "The wind bloweth," Jesus said to Nicodemus, as in midnight interview, they held converse upon Olivet. The wind sighed and moaned through the valley of Kedron, rushed through the branches of the olive trees and beat coldly upon the Ruler's brow. "*The wind bloweth*," said the Saviour, "and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: *So is every one that is born of the Spirit.*"

The word ordinarily used by the sacred writers for wind, is not the word employed in this narrative. It is not *pneuma*, wind, but *pnoé*—blast or *breath*. It is the same as in Acts 17, 25: "He giveth to all life and *breath*, and all things." It was as the sound of a mighty breathing. It would recall the vision of Ezekiel: "Come from the four winds, O breath and *breathe* on these." They would be especially reminded of the recent memorable manifestation of the risen Saviour: "*He breathed on them*; and said *Receive ye the Holy Ghost.*" The ascended exalted Redeemer was upon His throne; and now the sound as of a mighty breathing came straight "down" from heaven.

"Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as a rushing mighty wind." "Not, mark you, a wind," says Wm. Arthur, the eloquent exponent of the *Tongue of Fire*, "no gale sweeping over the City struck the sides of the house, and rushed around it. But "from heaven," directly downward fell "a sound," without shape or

step, or movement to account for it—a sound as if a mighty wind were rushing, not along the ground, but straight from on high, *like showers in a dead calm.*”

Mysterious sound, whence comest thou? Is it the Lord again *breathing* upon them, but this time from his throne. “When the risen Saviour stood in the midst of the disciples,” *He breathed on them*, and saith unto them, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost.*” And in the same manner at Pentecost the breath of God was indicative of the promised baptism. “And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with tongues as the spirit gave them utterance.” The influence of the spirit, as if pent up for ages accompanied by the likeness as of fire, a fitting symbol, expressive of the burning energy of the Holy Spirit’s operations, was poured forth in abundant affusion :

“O ’twas a most auspicious hour,  
Season of grace and sweet delight,  
When He came with mighty power,  
And light of truth divinely bright.”

Lord, we believe to us and ours  
The apostolic promise given :  
We wait the pentecostal powers,  
The Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

In harmony, with this record of sacred fact, we are accustomed, from *spiro*, to speak of the saving sanctifying influences of the Holy Ghost as an inspiration. The idea has found its noblest application, perhaps in the solemnization of sacramental service. “Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the *inspiration* of Thy Holy Spirit.” In the same strain, we are accustomed to plead in consecrated song.

“Breathe on us, Lord, in this our day, etc.”

The audible sign of accomplished spiritual baptism was richly significant in regard to *mode*. It was the sound as of a breathing *upon* the disciples.

The only attempt at an encounter with this invulnerable testimony, has been an assertion—perhaps *suggestion* would be the more correct expression: for but few expositors have had the temerity to attempt more than the suggestion—that the disciples must have been *immersed in sound!* If, instead of the sound, the room had been full of water that would have been immersion. The question is not water, at this point, but of *sound*. *It is not of quantity; but of mode.* They were not plunged into the sound: It “came from heaven,” directly *down* “where they were sitting.”

“The room in which I now write,” says the most recent exponent of immersionist theories, “is filled with air. I am certainly immersed in it, so in this case, there came a sound, &c.”

The absurdity of such an argument must be palpable to the dullest sense. The essential conditions and the direct effects are completely changed and reversed. Immersed in the air of the room? Certainly. But how did he get there? By walking, *plunging* into it. He may call that immersion but it is not baptism. The disciples at Pentecost were already sitting in the room when the *sound*, as of wind came *down* upon them. They were not plunged. There was no immersion—even in sound; but there was a glorious baptism.

#### IV. PENTECOST: VISIBLE SYMBOL.

Conscious of gracious manifestation and the *breathing* of hallowed influence, the waiting disciples—in bowed, hushed, expectant attitude, experiencing, doubt-

less, in that supreme moment, "the sacred awe which dares not move," gazing up in the direction of the rushing sound, with deepened sense of divine presence—beheld a visible glory, brightness as of flame, suggestive of the Shekinah.

Fire is one of the most potent forces of nature. It searches, purifies and transforms. That brightness as of purifying flame, "like as of fire," the beautiful and expressive emblem of "the spirit of burning," at first, as a luminous cloud, overshadowed them; and then, instantly, in disparted form and spiral shape, streamed down upon the head of each waiting disciple. "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues *like as of fire*, and it sat upon each of them." "Timidly turning upward, John sees Peter's head crowned with fire; Peter sees James crowned with fire; James sees Nathaniel crowned with fire; and round and round the fire sits upon each of them."\* "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Has that visible symbol of sacred record lost its significance? Are we not authorized to plead, in expectant attitude, for that spiritual baptism? Though, no longer accompanied by visible symbol, it constitutes the accomplishment of promise: "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost":—

Grant this, O holy God and true!  
The ancient seers, Thou didst inspire;  
To us perform the promise due;  
*Descend, and crown us now with fire.*

Strikingly and strictly *analogous* to the Pentecostal baptism was the scene, in the temple vision, of prophetic sanctification. The application by seraphic agency, of burning coals, *and not a plunge into the altar fire*, was the means and the mode of purification. The lips of

\* "The tongue of Fire,"—page 34.

Isaiah were touched with hallowed flame; and he laid it upon my mouth and said, Lo! this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

## V. EXEGESIS.

The element of fire in that baptism has been, in some cases, by strange exegesis, symbolize made to destruction. The jar and recoil of such an exposition we feel in all the instincts and sensibilities of our being. Baptism, in Christianity, carries with it the idea of salvation and not of death. "I indeed," said John, "baptize you with water," and that was all the Baptist could do for his disciples; but he announced a more glorious ministration. "He that cometh after me is mightier than I." He comes, not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. He shall accomplish that which no human agency can effect. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." The Saviour also, in his own ministry, used the same emblem as John and evidently with the same meaning, worth volumes as to the exact meaning of this symbol, "I am come to send fire on the earth,"—the fire of salvation,—"*Oh! that it were already kindled.*"

But I have a *baptism* to be baptised with, and how I am straitened till it be accomplished! First, the Saviour's own baptism, the mysterious cup pressed to his lips, and then the baptism of his people. How the deep intense yearning of Christ comes out in that utterance, which has been rendered: "I am come to send fire on the earth,"—the fire of salvation,—"*Oh, that it were already kindled!*"

## VI. SIGNIFICANCE OF SYMBOL.

The emblem of fire, by which the descent of the Holy Spirit was accompanied, was indicative of *personality*—not merely influence. Even amongst the Greeks and Romans the element of fire was suggestive and symbolical of a divine presence and personality. But to the Hebrew people especially this symbol was one of consecrated significance. When in the early time Abraham, standing by his altar, beneath the open sky, a solitary worshipper of Jehovah, asked some covenant sign, whereby he might know that though a stranger he should inherit the land, there passed before him, and between the two parts of the cleft sacrifice, a smoking furnace and a burning lamp. When the great *I Am* appeared to Moses in Horeb, the bush burnt with fire. That flame hallowed and consecrated every object around. Moses put off his shoes, reverentially worshipped, for the ground on which he stood was holy ground. When the redeemed people of God marched through the wilderness the Divine presence accompanied them, for guidance and defence,—a pillar of cloud by day, and a luminous flame by night. The brightness of the Shekinah, which flamed upon the Mercy Seat, was, for ages, the visible acknowledged symbol of the Thrice Holy One. At the dedication of the temple, the fire of God came down upon the altar, consumed the offerings, filled with its splendor the whole sanctuary, and the priests were unable to minister, because of the glory of God. In the magnificent imagery of the Apocalypse, in the midst of the Throne, gorgeous with jasper and sardine, around which living ones, in unceasing service perpetually cry, Holy, holy, holy, are the seven burning lamps of fire, which

are the seven spirits of God,—symbols always suggestive of the seven-fold energy and plentitude of grace which abide in Him whom we invoke:

Thrice holy fount, immortal fire !

We have thus a chain of symbolism, stretching from one end of Revelation to the other, in which the Pentecostal baptism of fire finds clear and satisfactory interpretation. The advent of the holy was not simply the communication of gracious influence; but a personal promised *presence*, "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter, *that He may abide with you for ever.*"

#### VII. THE SPIRIT OF BURNING.

The likeness as of fire, by which the baptism of the Spirit was accompanied, was indicative and expressive of the *purifying, sanctifying, transforming energy* of the Holy Ghost. "And it shall come to pass that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem." Holiness shall be the grand distinction of the Church of God. The filth of the daughters of the Zion shall be washed away; and the blood of Jerusalem shall be purged. Sanctity, and therefore spiritual power shall be a distinction of the people of God. Every one shall be called holy. Scriptural holiness shall spread through the land. Meetings for the promotion of higher life shall not be the exceptional arrangements of church organization. Holiness unto the Lord will become the normal condition of the people of God. The agency by which that



work of sanctifying power shall be carried on to a blessed consummation, has been indicated "by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning." In the last of the prophecies, that of Malachi, we have the glorious announcement which in every age has struck home to the heart of the church, and fired the expectation of waiting souls: the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for *He is like a refiner's fire*, and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Under this gracious dispensation of the Son of God, the operations of the Holy Spirit are represented as the fire of the refiner, and as the purifying of silver.

I have often seen the ore of precious metals as it has been dug from the rich vein, and from the rifted rock. It is generally threaded through and through, encrusted with impure and worthless substances. By what means shall the pure ore be separated from the crystallized rock? How shall the dross be purified from the silver? There can be but one certain efficient process. It is put into the fire—into the crucible—into *the smelting furnace*. There it flows down. The dross is purged. The impurities are consumed. In a pure white stream of molten flame the metal flows into the appointed mould. Apart from the softening, subduing, penetrating operations and influences of the Holy Spirit, our hearts are hard and dull and cold. But He sits as a refiner and purifier of silver. Threadings and incrustations of sin and selfishness are consumed; and the soul,

soft and plastic, melted into tenderness, takes the divine likeness and impress. With scriptural accuracy, therefore, we plead:

"Refining fire go through my heart,  
Illuminate my soul;  
Scatter the light through every part,  
And sanctify the whole."

#### VIII. PENTECOST: GOD'S BAPTISM.

In regard to the *visible symbol*, the baptismal flame by which the descent of the Spirit was accompanied, expressive of *burning* energy, were the disciples plunged into the fire? Was the element of fire, the *likeness* as of flame, applied to the waiting suppliants in that upper room? The history of that superlatively grand fact of the Christian economy is most minute and circumstantial. *The fire sat upon each of them!* It sat upon the head, the seat of intelligence, and covered the forehead. Every disciple was baptized. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost. That one authenticated fact of Pentecostal baptism, the fire upon the head, is abundantly ample for all purposes of demonstration. *That was God's baptism!* It was the model for the Christian church. It meets us upon the very threshold of Christianity. When, just before his death, a well known composer wrote his last hymn he emphasized the thought: rather in the dark with God than in the light of human wisdom without God. In the ordinance of baptism, administered by ourselves, as an institution of the church, we have so far as mode is concerned, for guidance and authority, the *model* baptism—the divinely promised baptism,—“baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” Even if the question were involved in some

obscurity, we would rather be in the dark with God, with this example before us, than follow the lights and the lamps of human teaching and the traditions of men.

There is no ambiguity. Suppose that a person in perplexity upon this point were invited to that upper room and permitted to witness the promised baptism of the Holy Ghost. The only thing visible in connection with that rush of energy, of which he becomes conscious, is the tongue of fire—the likeness as of flame. Yes, he would say, I understand it now ; I have been in doubt as to the New Testament meaning of that *Greek* verb *baptizo*. I have been undecided in relation to action and mode—implied and required. The baptism comprehends things of vital essential importance, of which no external symbol can afford adequate interpretation ; but, in relation to *mode*, it is luminous as the flame upon the forehead. I understand it all now : the baptismal symbol was applied to the heads of the disciples.

This anxious inquirer you next take down to the sea-shore, to the rushing river, or to the somewhat impure waters of the deep font, into which the shivering candidates are in succession thrust beneath the flood. He might say at once, I am perplexed more than ever. In that upper room all was clear ; it is now confusion worse confounded. The mode is reversed. *Instead of the element being applied to the candidate, the candidate is plunged into the element !*

In contrast with that *immersion* in water, we are called to witness another baptismal scene. The service is impressive. There is no disturbing influence. There is nothing to shock the sensibilities—even of the most refined taste, or of feminine delicacy of feeling. The

deep, silent hush has settled over the great congregation. The baptismal element is applied to the candidates. That is sufficient for satisfaction. *The correspondence is perfect. It harmonizes completely with God's baptism. In that case it was fire; in this case water. The element differs; but the mode is the same: baptism with water, and with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.*

## IX. PENTECOST: ALTERNATIVE VIEW.

It has been urged as an *opposite* and alternative view of this passage that the fire spoken of by John the Baptist was a penal one—that it refers to the unquenchable fire of hell.

Whence comes this suggestion of wrath and terror? Turning to the inspired history, and remembering with Richard Cecil, that “the meaning of the Bible is the Bible,” without resorting to any torturing process of violent criticism, are we compelled by any intuition of truth, or by any pressure of exegetical exigency, to adopt such a principle of interpretation?

It is easy to see, with Daniel Isaac, that the Pentecostal baptism is “very embarrassing to our Baptist brethren”; and that “if this difficulty cannot be got over *their cause is lost.*”

The bearing of the subject becomes so palpably evident, when searchingly investigated, that some *restraint* is felt in writing these lines. The demands of truth, however, are supreme and imperative. Force and fulness of conviction must find free and unfettered utterance. The examination of the question must be thorough and exhaustive, and then the results inevitably accepted.

Is there anything in the *nature* of that visible symbol to warrant the application which has been attempted? Was not the likeness as of fire, through all ages—at Abraham's altar, in Horeb's burning bush, in the wilderness pillar and cloud of fire, in the Shekinah of the palace sanctuary, in the dedication glory of the Temple—the constant consecrated emblem of the *gracious* Presence of God.

If not in the nature of the symbol, can we find, *experimentum crucis*, lurking in the *Form* of that visible symbol any latent suggestion of threatening and destruction? It was not a shapeless flame, or patriarchal lamp, or burning bush, or cloud-pillar, or seraphic coal from an altar-fire, or careening splendor of Chebar vision. It was not a flaming thunderbolt flashing vengeance upon the men who plotted and perpetrated the death of the "holy and just One." It was not the *gloria* of Italian art. It was a *tongue*—an instrument of speech—the voice of an appointed messenger—significant of the grand *agency* employed for the world's salvation. They began at once to speak with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Thus "the *tongue of fire*," and not the trumpet of an angel, became the hallowed *emblem* of published salvation to them that dwell upon the earth.

The alternative of John's testimony would be: I indeed baptize *you—you* my disciples—*you* on whom the mightier baptism of the Holy Ghost shall yet descend—"unto repentance." But he that cometh after me shall consume and destroy you. I baptize *you* with water,

but he shall burn *you* up with "unquenchable fire?" The record is explicit.

John, in testimony affirmed that Jesus should "baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire"—that He should save and sanctify His people—that He should thoroughly purge his floor"—that He should gather His wheat into the garner"—harvest home every golden sheaf—that then He should "burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." But are we to confuse and confound the brightness, "like as of fire," the consecrated symbol for ages of the Divine presence, with that lurid lasting flame which shall in the end consume the chaff? Was the "unquenchable fire" any part of that promised baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire, of which John testified, and for which the disciples were commanded to wait? The bare suggestion, of such an application, of the most glorious historic fact in the church of God, startles and shocks the very spirit and genius of devout feeling, scholarly taste, and of high-toned exegesis.

Desperate indeed must be the cause which demands "confusion of tongues" contravening and traversing grand historic fact! Forlorn the hope which can take advantage of mere miserable subterfuge. Fundamental is the distinction and the difference, cleaving their way to the very heart of the subject, between the baptismal symbol, the likeness as of fire, which came down upon the disciples at Pentecost, and the "unquenchable fire" of hell. The one was promise; the other threatening. The one was likeness; the other real. The one was salvation: the other damnation. The one was a *baptism*; the other a *burning up*. The one was for the wheat or garnered souls; the other for the ungodly "which are as the chaff." The one was fulfilled at Pen-

tecost; the other awaits its most fearful exhibitions in the punishment of the finally impenitent. The one was the beginning of a new dispensation of mercy; the other an element of "the *wrath to come*."

If in such a contrast, and upon such a theme, the *modal* idea must still be contended for, the case is conclusive: The baptismal fire was by *effusion*; the fire of infinite wrath suggests the ideal of *immersion*. The brow of each waiting disciple, in the upper room, was touched and brightened by the streaming, luminous likeness as of flame; the finally impenitent will be cast "*into a lake of fire*."

#### X. THE BAPTISMAL SERVICE OF PENTECOST.

There was baptism *with* water subsequent to the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. The more we ponder the facts of conversion at Pentecost, the greater the improbabilities of baptism by immersion, will appear. Difficulties must have been all but insuperable. It would be difficult, even to-day, in the *heart* of a crowded western metropolitan city, with all the prejudices and prepossessions of the people in favor of Christianity, to make arrangement for the baptism of three thousand, converts by immersion, in the afternoon of a single day, though water is vastly more abundant, and more accessible than in oriental cities. In few places, perhaps, could fewer facilities have been found than in Jerusalem, It was at the driest season of the year,—when the waters of the brook Kedron failed.

"*Three thousand persons*"—says Dr. Robinson, the eminent scholar—whose Oriental travels and Biblical Researches constitute a most competent authority upon this point,—"*are said to have been baptized at Jerusa-*

lem apparently on the day at the season of Pentecost in *June*; and the same rite is necessarily implied in respect to *five thousand* more. Against the idea of full *immersion* in these cases there lies a difficulty *apparently insuperable* in the scarcity of water. There is *in summer no running stream* in the vicinity of Jerusalem, except *the mere rill of Siloam*, a few rods in length; and the city is and was supplied with water from its cisterns and public reservoirs. From neither of these sources could a supply have been well obtained for the immersion of 8,000 persons. The same scarcity of water *forbids the use of private baths* as a general custom."

There would be a difficulty also in regard to *time*. The day of Pentecost begun in prayer. The baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire followed. Then came the testimonies of the disciples: they spake with tongues "as the spirit gave them utterance." After the testimony came the keen, pungent sermon of St. Peter. An anxious inquiry meeting followed; and thousands of penitents had to be directed in the way of salvation. Opportunity would be afforded for profession of discipleship. Before a single baptism could have been administered the day must have been far spent. With what possibility of decorum, and appropriate religious exercises, could three thousand persons have been *immersed* in water in the brief closing hours of that day? In a Congregational Church, of the United States, the opportunity was once afforded of witnessing the reception of considerably over a hundred converts. The sacrament of baptism was administered, by immersion, to a few candidates on the Friday evening, and to a much larger number at the Sunday service. The time occupied in the different portions of those services, was indicative



of the possibilities of Pentecost. An early immersionist writer, *Du Veil*, "Acts of the Apostles literally explained," *in loco*, remarks: "No wonder is to be made that three thousand persons should be *plunged*, in one day, by Peter, a *fisherman and used to the water*." The explanation does not quite dispose of the difficulties of the case.

But even if there had been ample facilities, in regard to time and *place* there were still more serious difficulties to be encountered. There were pools in the city, Bethesda and Siloam, but they were under the direct control of the authorities—the bitterest opponents of Jesus of Nazareth. The pool of Bethesda, used for the washing of sacrifices, was in the precincts of the Temple, and certainly could not have been given up to the followers of the "Nazarene." The pool of Siloam was three-fourths of a mile distant from the city; and we hear of no procession to the pool. *Nudity* in the administration, in a promiscuous assemblage, could not have been thought of; there was no time for providing bathing dresses; and the art and elaboration of modern immersionist services had not been invented. Immersion at Pentecost, in view of the insuperable difficulties involved, must have been a sheer impossibility.

It has been replied to this objection that Pentecost was a "day of power" and that the converts to Christianity had "favor with all the people." With the narrative before us, we cannot regard this answer as rising to the dignity of sober sufficient confutation. The pools at Jerusalem were under control of the men who "crucified the Lord of Glory;" and therefore inaccessible to the Galilean disciples. Even when priests and pharisees in the temple, in the last days of the Saviour's ministry,

were planning and plotting his death: "*all the people* were very attentive to hear him." At Pentecost the Apostles of Jesus Christ and the first members of the Christian Church, though in favor with the people, were so far from being *avored* by constituted authorities, that, in the immediate narrative, we read: "the captain of the temple, and the Saducees, came upon them, *being grieved that they taught the people*; and they laid hands upon them and put them in hold until next day."

The baptism of initiation to the christian church, at Pentecost, in the name of the Triune God must have been "*with water*" and therefore in consonance "*with the Holy Ghost and fire.*" The three bear record; "and these three agree in one."

#### XI. THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH.

The Ethiopian Eunuch read as he sat in his chariot in the Prophecy of Isaiah. He had before him in immediate connection with the narrative of the Saviour's Passion, "wounded for our transgressions," the magnificent Messianic prediction: He shall *sprinkle* many nations. The rendering of this passage in the Septuagint has been adduced. The Hebrew word, according to eminent Oriental scholars, and this settles the case, signifies: *to sprinkle*. "Does it not," inquires Dr. Clarke, "refer to the conversion of the Gentile nations?" The Eunuch was reading when, driving in his chariot, he was joined by the Evangelist Philip, on his way through the Desert to Gaza. The thoroughfare to that southernmost city of Palestine was through a region destitute of dwellings, a waste land in which no man has ever found foaming flood, or water deep enough for submersion, but which might afford sufficient for baptism by effusion. As Philip expounded the Scriptures, con-

cerning the sacrificial work and redeeming purposes of the Lord Jesus Christ, we can readily understand that one expression of the Prophet would most forcibly arrest his attention. He well knew the exclusiveness, the severely local character of the Jewish religion; but here was an utterance which seemed to overleap all barriers, and to comprehend within its range the scattered families of the earth. What does this mean Philip? Does this refer to the conversion and baptism of Gentile nations? How the soul of Philip would take fire and his countenance glow with suffused light as he expatiated upon the universality of the Gospel—for Jew and Gentile—for bond and free—for the cultured Greek, the haughty Roman, and the swarthy African—for all nations and tongues of the earth. We do not wonder at the surprise and exclamation of this Ethiopian Eunuch:—"Lo! Water."\* As the baptismal element was applied in the only way probable or ever possible in that *desert* the Evangelist, no doubt, explained very fully the agency and work of the Holy Spirit, as the chief distinction of this Christian dispensation, and as constituting the most distinguished fulfilment of the prophetic utterance the confirmation and the consecration of the mode implied in John's ministry, perpetuated in the Church—baptism *with* water. Thus the Treasurer of Queen Candace was enrolled amongst the first fruits of the great

\*The preposition *eis*, "into" upon which great stress has been placed and the changes rung, "with variations" of every possible kind, is after all but very slender ground on which to base the weight of argument in favor of immersion. The same preposition occurs no less than five times in this same narrative: *eis*, "unto Gaza,—*eis*, "to Jerusalem,—*eis*, "at Azotoz,—*eis*, "to Cæsarea." "They went down," from the chariot, *eis*, "to the water,"—just in the same sense, as Philip afterwards came to Cæsarea." The *eis* cannot, even upon immersionist theory, be made to do here. The baptism was a subsequent act.

prediction, passing on to its accomplishment, *He shall sprinkle many nations.*

## XII. BAPTIZED UNTO MOSES.

If the principle of interpretation which has guided us through prophetic ages, which found such ample and evident illustration at Pentecost, be a correct one, it will not fail us in the only remaining passage—in which there was literal baptism with water, and positive indication of the mode in which the element employed came into contact with the persons baptized, “Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were *under* the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all *baptized* unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.” They were under the cloud, and yet were baptized. “By faith,” says the apostle, in Hebrews, they passed through the Red Sea as by *dry land*: which the Egyptians, assaying to do, were drowned.” There was a baptism in that passage through the sea; but, except the fact: that the passage was on dry land, incompatible with the idea of immersion, we have no distinct intimation as to mode. We must travel back in search of historic fact.

That memorable event of Hebrew history was consecrated by the most sacred historic associations. There was there a great national baptism. The captivity of Israel was broken. From the land of bondage they were to be forever separated: and were now to constitute the Church of God—the *church in the wilderness*. Their passage through the Red Sea was for them a baptism. What are the facts of that baptism? In what manner, on that night of marvellous mighty deliverance, was the baptismal element brought into contact with the people of Israel? “And the Lord caused the sea to go back by

a strong east wind, all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground," etc. Some other facts of that midnight march through the mighty deep have been furnished to us by the Psalmist: "the clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound; thine arrows also went abroad." Through the dry depths of the sea, as on a pavement of adamant, marched the host of God. The channel was not narrow and crowded. The waves stood far apart as if they had been walls of granite; and so broad was the pathway, and far away the watery walls, affording ample space for great multitudes to move abreast, that in a few hours the passage had been effected. "They passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned." The depths have covered them: they sunk into the bottom as a stone. *They sank as lead in the mighty waters.* That submerging of the host of Pharoah was the *flood* of Egypt to which the prophet refers. The Israelites were baptized. They were saved—gloriously delivered. But whence came the baptismal element? The clouds *poured* out water. Only by affusion, by pouring or sprinkling, could the baptismal waters come into contact with the redeemed people. *The Israelites were baptized; but not immersed. The Egyptians were immersed, but not baptized.*

XIII. THREE BEAR RECORD: OMNE TRINUM PERFECTUM.

"There were three," says John the Divine, "that bear witness in earth, the spirit, the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." They agree in one in relation to their *purpose*: the necessity of purity; and, also, in reference to *mode*, the sprinkling of water

which sanctified harmonizes with the *blood of sprinkling* which speaketh better things.

These closing voices of inspiration are in harmony with all the utterances of the past. They sound like the echo, along the corridors of ages, of the penitential prayer: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be *clean*." The hyssop was used, in services of solemn dedication and ceremonial purification, for *sprinkling* the blood and water upon "all the people."

It is impossible to ponder the teachings of God's word, in relation to *mode* without the impression of *completeness* of efficacy, which, in idea and expression, in substance and in symbol, are intimately and uniformly associated with *effusion*. The suggestion, not unfrequently made, more effective in some cases than a better reason, that sprinkling is of necessity symbolical and significant of that which is slight and superficial in idea and result, vanishes before the facts and forms of sacred and authoritative record. "If I wash thee not," said Jesus to Simon Peter, when he had "poured water into a basin," and began to wash the disciples feet, "thou hast no part in me." "Not my feet only," was the impulsive reply, "but also my hands and my head." The only case upon record of a demand for *more water*, as requisite to complete purification; and "Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save his feet, but is *clean every whit*."

Salvation and purification by sprinkling, ideal or actual, shadowy, slight and superficial! What is the testimony of the ages, of the goodly fellowship of the prophets, "of the glorious company of the apostles," of "the noble army of martyrs," and of the "great cloud

of witnesses?" They have but one voice. They came "to the blood of *sprinkling*, which speaketh better things."

"This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood." The flowing of that mingled stream, of "blood and water," from the pierced side of Jesus, was the accomplishment of the prediction: "A fountain opened for sin and uncleanness." The main idea of that promise, and of its fulfillment, has found application in the stanza:

"There is a fountain filled with blood,  
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins, &c.,"

which was recently appealed to in a convocation sermon in advocacy of immersion. Were the mode then contended for, "plunged beneath that flood," of divine appointment, the phraseology of the hymn would thread through and through the entire teaching of God's word. Cowper's hymn of Calvary has marked merits of another kind; and therefore in spite of defect has struck home to the heart of the Church. But in the imagery alluded to, it thoroughly and positively traverses and contradicts the voice of God in fact and testimony.

Turning to the inspired statement of sacred *fact*, from which the stanza has been woven, we read: "One of the soldiers, with a spear, pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and *his record is true*." That purple current from the pierced side of the Redeemer was the "fountain" for sin; and there is not, therefore, perhaps, in the whole range of hymnology, a more striking example of incongruous imagery, and of utterly false and absolutely *unscriptural* figure than that which finds ex-

pression in the opening stanza of that otherwise noble and treasured hymn.

The "water and the blood" are in perfect accord; and "through sanctification of the *spirit* unto obedience and *sprinkling* of the blood of Jesus Christ" these "agree in one." Therefore we plead with propriety and with the utmost scriptural accuracy:

"Let the water and the blood,  
From thy wounded side which flow'd,  
Be of sin the double cure,  
Save from wrath and make me pure."

#### XIV. JEWISH BAPTISMS.

The Greek verb *baptizo*, in some of its forms, has been occasionally employed in the New Testament, with reference to lustrations and purifications not connected with Christian baptism. The value of such passages can only, of course, be incidental and collateral; but it may be well to ascertain to what extent, and with what accord, they are in keeping with the united and unbroken testimony of all the past.

"For the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the traditions of the elders, and when they come from the market, except they wash, *baptisóntai*, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing, baptismous, of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables." *Mark* vii. 3, 4.

The oriental *mode* of baptizing the hands before eating, the *pouring* of water, can be fully ascertained by reference to Thompson's "Land and the Book"—the testimony of twenty years of Syrian observation. Elisha *poured* water on the hands of Elijah," 2 Kings iii. 11; and as Eastern customs do not usually change, the same



practice is still continued. The servant *pours* water from the pitcher on the hands of his master and upon the hands of all the guests. Water is never previously poured into a basin as in Occidental life. The servant pours the water from a pitcher, and carries a vessel to receive the water as it falls from the hands. The *pouring* of water in these ablutions, upon which, in the time of Christ, much stress was laid, was designated by St. Mark as *baptism*.

The tables, or as in the margin beds, *klinon*, were beds or couches—often used for beds at night and for couches at meals. If an unclean person sat upon the couch or bed it was rendered unclean and needed purification. To guard against defilement the Pharisees were scrupulously exact and frequent in their lustrations. They *baptized* their *beds* and *couches*. Was that baptism an immersion? Were the beds plunged in some foaming flood before they were used for repose? The Pharisees baptized their beds and couches. They would unless insane, have immersed them.

The characteristic style of Rev. Daniel Isaac, in exposition of this passage, though not quoted as a model for controversialist, has the ring of clear, Saxon sense, and finds warrant in the subject :

“The vessels of brass were undoubtedly used for ordinary purposes; and, how these vessels were baptized any servant girl can give better information than a learned divine, I have just interrogated my servant upon this knotty subject: How do you wash your brass pans? I *pour* water upon them. Do you never dip them in water? No; never. As to the tables whether we take them literally or as the couches on which they sat or re-

clined at meals,—dipping is out of the question. What then becomes of the bold assertion that baptism always denotes immersion."

The New Testament sense of Baptism can only be settled by appeal to the inspired writers, and the *usus loquendi* of the word. This one example abundantly disposes of and sweeps away, like the chaff of the threshing floor, all *exclusively* immersionist assumptions.

The case is conclusive: In ancient ablutions for purposes of legal and ceremonial purification beds and couches were baptized. In such frequent baptisms there was no possibility of immersion. Immersion and baptism are not equivalent terms. Therefore *immersion is not Scriptural baptism*.

#### XV. RHANTIZO.

The question has been asked: If there is not a word in Greek literature for *sprinkling*? Yes! we say *rhantizo* means to sprinkle; and there is another word *cheo*, which means to pour. Then if sprinkling or pouring be the Scriptural mode in the application of the baptismal element, why it is demanded, in tone of triumph, were not *rhantizo* and *cheo* employed by the sacred writers. It may be sufficient to ask in reply, if baptism meant "mode, and only mode," *dip*, and *only dip*, why were not *buthizo*; *dupto*, *epikluzo*, or *pontizo* used for the sacrament of baptism?

*Buthizo*, to throw in the deep, *to immerse*, to sink, would have been Greek equivalent for *immerse*. *Kata-duö* "to go under," to sink, to immerse has been, for example substituted by later Greek writers for *baptizo*. "Immerse," *ka tadusi*, the child three times," was the phrase of Photius—Patriarch of Constantinople. Triune

Immersion, it is well known, was amongst the corruptions early introduced into the Greek Church. Infant-baptism is practised ; but they immerse three times and sprinkle or pour three times. But for the adequate expression of the active immersion the verb *kataduō* obtained preference, in some cases at least, over the consecrated New Testament *baptizo*.

The fact is that the verb *baptizo*, consecrated by inspiration, means a great deal more than words which simply imply mode. A man going out in a shower of rain, without an umbrella, will be sprinkled ; but that is not baptism. An excursionist upon the lake on a summer evening, may be immersed by falling out of his boat into the water ; But that immersion is not baptism. To baptize is to produce an effect without specifying mode, or change corresponding in character and completeness with the agent or element employed ; and hence its exact and exquisite adaptation to the Christian ordinance.

#### XVI. AUTHORIZED VERSION.

The fidelity of the venerable men who translated the English Bible has again and again been called in question ; because Greek words, noun and verb, were only transferred in the Anglicized forms of baptism and baptize. But does not the same principle lie at the very foundation of English literature ? More than any other, the English language is *eclectic*. It has been enriched from all sources ; and, especially in the class of words to which baptism belongs, has been indebted to the unrivalled language and literature of ancient Greece. Even supposing that we were prepared to admit that baptize meant only *mode*, and that the mode was to put under water, the Anglicized Latin words *immersion* and *im-*

merse do not correctly and fully express all that is meant by putting the candidate into the water, in the ordinance of baptism. They simply speak of *putting under*—without having anything whatever to say of any subsequent action—raising up from the water—an important part of the transaction. There is the Saxon word *dip*, which, as if “to the manner born,” conveys, with the utmost accuracy and precision, the meaning and the mode contended for; but it is difficult, without a seeming *burlesque* upon the sacred words of Jesus, to carry *dip* as an equivalent of baptize through the New Testament: “*Are ye able to be dipped with the dipping that I am dipped with?*” There is an ambiguity about the Latin phrase which helps, by its haze, to conceal somewhat the absurdity of certain renderings, and which has secured for it a decided preference; but, even were we prepared to surrender the question of mode, we should be sorry to accept the Anglicized Latin, *immerse*, for the Anglicized, consecrated Greek, *baptize*.

If in opposition to all canons of criticism and of common sense the modal meaning must still be insisted upon; it may be pardonable to apply another test. The word *plunge* is used as an equivalent of immersion:—John the plunger—the plunging of repentance—he shall plunge you in fire—plunged with the plunging that I am plunged with—the plunging of cups and pots, of brazen vessels and tables (beds or couches)—they eat not except they plunge—plunged into Moses—plunged into Jesus Christ!” The absurdity is at once apparent.

Clamour for external rite, moreover, is associated with and constitutes a distinctive feature of some of the least reputable of all religious organizations. In the rhapsody and rhodomontade of Mormonite preachers

listened to from curiosity in other days, there was little of polygamy, of the land of promise, or of any other peculiarity of Mormonism ; but a strenuous and vociferous contention for *immersion*. Mormonite converts, perverts, were exultingly led down into the liquid grave.

#### XVII. DEMONSTRATION.

Thus, in relation to *mode* in baptism, we have warrant for the application of the baptismal element to the person, that by effusion—of the most ample and assuring character. We have traversed the complete circle of sacred record. The Old Testament and the New, the Law and the Prophets, ordinance and symbol, ablution and imagery, the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire, and, in all the facts and inferences of subsequent statement, we have one uniform, conclusive, and triumphant testimony in approval and in attestation of *affusion*.

Unquestionably too much of recognition, far too much in controversy, has been accorded to a matter of mere form. “the letter killeth ; but the spirit giveth life : How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious ?” The *genius* of our holy Christianity, like the snow-white brilliant dome of the loftiest Alpine mountain, towering in grandeur above mist and vapour, in its magnificence of spiritual reality, *stands far above the region of shadow and of form*. “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.”

The agitation to which the Churches have been subjected upon the vexed but comparatively insignificant question of mode in the administration of baptism, may

by means of parallel instituted between this sacrament and that of the Lord's Supper, be made to stand out in its true light. The Lord's Supper was solemnly instituted. We have a very full account of the first celebration. The disciples, as they took the elements of the broken body and shed blood, did not sit or kneel as with us; but reclined upon their couches. The consecrated name by which the apostle designated this sacrament of the body and blood of Jesus was *deipnon*—which in classic usage meant the *chief meal* of the day. To observe this ordinance *literally*, we ought, in the night time, in an upper room, reclining upon sofas, or couches, to take a full meal, and the Lord's Supper ought to be celebrated as a grand festal entertainment. Would any thoughtful Christian man ever dream of commencing a crusade against the Churches because *deipnon*, the Supper, meant the principal meal of the day: and because in the administration of this sacrament we use only the smallest quantity of bread and wine. It would not be difficult, upon the basis of such a parallel, to construct a conclusive *reductio ad absurdum* argument; but the simple suggestion, in the direction of consistency in dealing with the two sacraments of the Church, and of making the same law of interpretation to sweep the whole circle, sufficiently the supreme folly of attempting a lofty fabric upon so slight a foundation.

But if, while satisfied that *others should adopt the mode*, which to them seems preferable, we are *challenged* for scriptural proof, and *denounced* for inconsistency, we confidently appeal to the oracle of God. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them." The response is clear and decisive, the evidence obvious and

abundant, and the testimony triumphant and complete. There are three that bear witness. There is a three-fold baptism: *with* water and *with* the Holy Ghost and *with* fire. In each case, as already elucidated and demonstrated, there is an application of the baptismal element to the candidate. *These three agree in one.* "In the mouth of two or three witnesses," upon the authority of the great Lawgiver, "every word may be established."

XVII. SUMMARY OF MODE.

1. Evangelical promise: "I will *sprinkle* clean water.

2. Different baptisms: "*Sprinkling* the unclean sanctified to the purifying of the flesh; and was by inspired authority baptism.

3. Throughout prophetic imagery submersion implied calamity.

4. In all the symbolism of Psalms and Prophecy whenever and wherever *water* was poured or sprinkled, as in rain and dew, it invariably meant blessing and salvation; and the mode consecrated by inspiration could not be consistently abandoned.

5. John testified: "I *indeed* baptize you *with* water."

6. The baptism of the Holy Ghost was by *pouring* out. "They of the circumcision were astonished because that on the Gentiles also was *poured* out the gift of the Holy Ghost." "Then remembered I," says the Apostle Peter, in explanation, "the word of the Lord, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost."

7. Baptisms that exactly agreed: "With water and with the Holy Ghost." Immersion is never admin-

istered by pouring: the baptism of the Holy Ghost was by pouring out; therefore the *pouring*, and not immersion, is scriptural baptism.

8. Audible sign, "He breathed on them."

9. The baptism of Fire at Pentecost was by application of the visible symbol to the persons. The "tongue of fire," suggestive in its form of testimony for Christ, sat upon the head. The idea of immersion in a tongue is utterly absurd. The disciples were not plunged into the emblem; but the likeness as of fire descended and rested upon each of them.

10. To the administration of baptism to three thousand persons, on the day of Pentecost, there must have been insuperable obstacles; and therefore it may be assumed that the baptisms were *with* water.

11. The Ethiopian Eunuch was baptized in the desert, a dry and thirsty land, where no water was, except when obtained as Isaac did by sinking deep wells, and therefore not affording facilities for immersion. But as the Eunuch read and Philip expounded the *sprinkling* of many nations, they come unexpectedly, as the narrative implies, to water sufficient for the administration of baptism by sprinkling.

12. Baptized unto Moses in cloud and sea: The Egyptians were immersed but not baptized; *the Israelites were all baptized but not one Israelite was immersed.*

13. Baptism, as the consecrated designation of the initiatory ordinance of the Christian Church, cannot in any word, merely expressive of *mode*, find adequate equivalent. Immersion and baptism are not equivalent terms; for a man may be immersed and yet not baptized.



14. The administration of baptism with water, the element applied to the candidate, corresponds with the "breaking of bread," small in quantity, and with the wine, in the administration of the Lord's Supper. The philosophy may be explained: Simplicity of outward sign, does not absorb the interest of the moment. It is calculated to direct the mind at once to the true significance.\*

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## CHAPTER V.

### SPIRITUAL BAPTISM: ARGUMENT FROM ANALOGY.

"One baptism."—*St. Paul.*

"The doctrine of baptisms."—*St. Paul.*

"One the pure baptismal flame."—*Charles Wesley.*

"But observe, yet further, that from that whole, so various, so vast, so complete as it is, we gather a final total impression of the truth which it brings, which is far more sufficient and far more impressive than we otherwise could have had."—*Dr. R. S. Storrs.*

In one of the grand and gorgeous cathedrals of Europe, "unimpaired, shining, imperial, in the serene Italian air," the vast and varied magnificence and massy richness of stately aisle, wreathed pillar, "storied window," fretted roof, and the solemn, silent gloom at once strike the sense with awe; but immediately there follows the satisfying consciousness of a unity reaching up

\* "A little drop of water may serve the fulness of divine grace in baptizing as well as a small piece of bread, and the least tasting of wine in the Holy Supper."—*Witsins.*

to the very ideal of perfection. Through mighty nave, transept, chancel and every extension, there is the expression of supreme architectural harmony.

In the magnificent temple of *inspired* truth we may stand with subdued and reverential awe beneath the lofty dome—tread the noble aisles which stretch through centuries of prophetic ministration—traverse every recess, angle and extension, with the certainty that each several part will deepen the sense of that perfect unity of idea—to which the glorious structure, as a whole, gives voice and eloquent expression.

We have now, therefore, to examine some passages of another class, in which baptism is spoken of in the New Testament. They are mainly *figurative* and do not admit of any positive proof, as to *manner* of baptismal administration; but for *profound* importance of theme, force of figure and argument from analogy, the searching *test* which they supply of that continuity of scriptural idea, up to this point, indisputable and undisturbed, demand special and separate consideration.

#### I. THE GREAT COMMISSION.

The Saviour in the Great Commission said nothing of water. That command, to disciple, *mathéteusate*, all nations, was given at a time when the one absorbing theme was the advent of the Spirit; and it cannot, even in thought, be separated from the last promise: "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." The command must be interpreted in the light of the promise. There was silence in regard to *mode*; but *not many days hence* there would be complete elucidation. Two things would be at once suggested to the minds of the disciples: Judaism, the adoption and the glory and the service of God and the covenants pertained

pre-eminently to *one* nation; but the Gospel, a more glorious ministration of the Spirit, is, in co-ordinate and co-extensive sense, for *all* nations: there is no hint of restriction,—only of enlargement,—*the world takes the place of the nation*. The other thought which would most immediately and most permanently impress the minds of the disciples, significant of closer relationship to God, would be that of *dedication* to the Triune One—*baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost*.

That which ought in the commission to be considered as subordinate has, however, received most distinct recognition; and that which, even in the outward and visible sign, should occupy a secondary place, has been brought into boldest and most distinct relief. Appeal to the Commission for proof of immersion has been thrown into syllogistic shape :

Christ commanded His Apostles to baptize.

The meaning of baptize, according to *all the learning in the world*, is immerse, or its equivalent.

Therefore the Commission authorizes immersion.

A more striking exhibition of the *Petitio Principio*, a mere begging of the question, could not perhaps be attempted. The usual assumption in the premises, through all this parade of halting logic: that by confession of learned men baptism and immersion are equivalent, constitutes the *fallacy*, and vitiates the conclusion. Taking up the most accessible authority, upon the meaning of the Greek verb, Dr. Robinson's Lexicon, a work of the very highest authority for scholarly thoroughness, we find that, in the earliest Latin versions of the New Testament, the Greek *baptizo* "is never

translated by *immergo*; shewing that there was something in the rite of baptism to which the latter did not correspond."

"But nine-tenths of the christian world," says Dr. Pope, Professor of Theology, one of the most learned men in England, "have understood by baptism the *pouring* of water"—effusion and not immersion.\*

The New Testament meaning of the verb *Baptizo*, around which this controversy has gathered, and which has so often been made the battle ground of fierce disputation, we have been able to determine in the New Testament sense. The classic usage of this word, notwithstanding erudite and elaborate investigation in that direction, is of comparatively little value in this question; and the results of learned disquisition are of no material importance. Such words as *aggelos*, *ekklesia*, *pistis*, almost all theological and descriptive terms, have in the Gospel changed their meaning. They are used not as by old Greek writers; but *with a New Testament sense*. The only valid inquiry in relation to such words, so far as the teachings of christianity are concerned, is that by which their force and significance as used by the inspired writers of the New Testament, can be ascertained.

"The body of learned critics and lexicographers," says the eminent theologian and scholar Dr. Dwight,—who tells us that he "examined almost one hundred instances, in which the word *baptizo*, and its derivatives, are used in the New Testament, and four in the Septuagint," "declare that the original meaning of both these words (*baptizō* and *baptō*) is to *tinge*, *stain*, *dye*, or *color*; and that, when it means immersion, it is

\*Christian Theology, p. 670.

only in a secondary and occasional sense; derived from the fact that such things as are *dyed, stained, or colored*, are often immersed for this end. This interpretation of the words also they support by such a series of quotations as seem unanswerably to evince that this was the original, classical meaning of these words."

"I do," says Professor Stuart, "consider it as quite plain, that none of the circumstantial evidence thus far, proves immersion to have been exclusively the mode of Christian baptism, or even that of John. Indeed, I consider this point so far made out that I can hardly suppress the conviction, that if any one maintains the contrary, it must be either because he is unable rightly to estimate the nature and power of the Greek language; or because he is influenced in some measure by party-feeling; or else because he has looked at the subject in only a partial manner, without examining it fully and thoroughly."—P. 313.

Very reluctantly have authorities been multiplied; but only in this way can sweeping assertion in regard to "all the learning in the world" be satisfactorily refuted. The influential names of Robinson, Dwight, Stuart and Pope have been cited, not because of their opinions on baptisms, but as representatives of the most advanced scholarship, critical and theological, of modern times.

The preponderance of scholarship, extensive research, and acknowledged erudition are in affirmation of what Lexicographer and Theological Professor have deliberately declared. What then are the value and

validity of demonstration, based upon premises so false? It must always prove fallacious and delusive—*flimsy and frail as a spider's web.*

## II. ONE BAPTISM.

There is one Lord, one faith, *one baptism*; the grand essential baptism of the Holy Ghost—of which the application of water is only the symbol. Adherents of the immersionist theory are in danger, in strife and in the strenuousness of persistent and impassioned appeals, of resting in the shadow and of losing sight of the one essential glorious baptism of the spirit of God. Great injustice has been done to a noble passage, in the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians by the unwarrantable severance of a single clause from the context—thus wresting, as *also the other scriptures*, and taking away gems of truth from the rich and beautiful setting which God gave them. The “one baptism” occupies conspicuous and commanding position in the very centre of a most magnificent passage, descriptive of the grand and glorious essentials of the Christian system—especially of its harmony and spiritual unity. The introduction, to such a connection, of a clause having relation to mere rite and external service, would not only constitute a juxtaposition of the most incongruous and inconceivable kind; but it would be a violation of the spirit of Christianity and it would be strangely at variance with the logical sequence of the passage: “there is one, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in you all.” The force and beauty of the text are brought out in the noble

hymn, on the "*Communion of Saints*." A single stanza will be sufficient for illustration :

"Build us in the body up,  
Call'd in the high calling's hope :  
One the Spirit whom we claim ;  
*One the pure baptismal flame :*  
One the faith and common Lord ;  
One the Father lives adored,  
Over, through and in us all ;  
God incomprehensible."

Rather than be a party to strife in which outward service should be unduly exalted in the Church at Corinth, the apostle Paul, who exulted in the one baptism of the Holy Ghost, was prepared to sink the symbol and to abandon the rite, and with vehemence exclaimed for *Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel*. "I do not know what God intends to do with me," said one of the most distinguished Baptist ministers, whom I have been privileged to know, in these Eastern Provinces—with whom, in his last sickness I had much intercourse, "I do not know what God intends to do with me," he said, with all the energy of which he was capable, just before death, "but if I should be raised up and be permitted to preach again, two themes now seem to me only worthy of consideration. I shall feel that I have a special mission to preach holiness and the *importance of the one glorious baptism of the Holy Ghost*."

### III. BURIED WITH HIM BY BAPTISM.

The baptism of the Holy Ghost alone introduces us into that close and vital *relationship* with Christ which satisfies the soul. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into His death. Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into His death : that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father,

even so we also should walk in newness of life." "For if we have been planted together into the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection. Knowing this that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we shall not serve sin." \*

The Apostle Paul, whose acute and comprehensive mind grasped the most subtle and profound laws and principles of spiritual life, developes, in this noble passage, wrought out in logical and luminous language, a three-fold relationship to Christ—crucified, buried and planted together. By Romans, for whom this epistle was written, "*a handful of dust flung upon a corpse was held to be a legal ritual burial,*" and accustomed to the practice of *burning* their dead, of which the ashes were collected and deposited in tomb or urn, the appositeness of this allusion to the Spirit's baptism,—which alone could be meant in this connection, a baptism of fire, an element of searching, dissolving, purifying, quickening energy—would be at once apparent, and the illustration would carry and command conviction and intelligent acceptance of the important truth. In spiritual crucifixion the old nature gradually dies, as in the Roman mode of death upon the cross, the victim after excruciating pain and lingering agony at last expired. In burial, *by baptism of the Holy Ghost*,—for the whole process is one of spiritual change and acknowledged canons of criticism,

\* John Wesley, *in lo co*, says "Buried with him, alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion."—*Notes*.

Wesleyan and other expositors have supposed that, in the phrase of the Apostle, there was allusion to *ancient* immersions—purifications of the Jewish Church, which were supposed to be mostly by immersion. Later research has done much to correct the supposition.



shut us up to one law of interpretation—the soul of the believer crucified with Christ, dying unto the world, nevertheless lives and, quickened, purified, saved and sanctified, is thrilled and pervaded by the pulsation and power of a new life. The metaphor of planting is also employed in this passage to work out the same thought—a life of faith *rooted* in Christ Jesus. This baptism into Christ's death, by the agency and operation of the Holy Ghost, fulfils every conception of the mind and meets, and satisfies every capacity of the renewed nature. Conscious of insufficient religious life and power, we meet occasionally with cases of doubt and perplexity. It cannot, in view of well authenticated facts, be regarded as any violation of the law of Christian charity to make the assertion that the policy and practice of some religionists, always troublesome neighbours, meddling and muddling, is for the sake of propounding a solution, to confuse and disturb the simple hearted and unwary ones. In such cases the success is sometimes worthy of a better cause, and immersion in water is vainly resorted to—because of the assurance, confidently but *falsely* given, that such an act in itself must be accompanied by great and signal blessing. Not in any such resource can rest and satisfaction be found. Some time ago the Baptist churches of one of our metropolitan cities were jubilant over the accession to their ministerial ranks of a clergyman from an influential Episcopal church ; but the result was chagrin and bitter disappointment : he soon severed his connection with his new associates and gave in his adherence to another religious organization. In such circumstances it is always *better to give than to receive*. Only in the baptism of the Holy Ghost can we find central bliss, stability and certainty of spiritual life. That

richer effusion therefore with faith and fervor we invoke :

“Come, Holy Ghost all quick'ning fire !  
Come and our hallowed hearts inspire,  
Sprinkled with the atoning blood :  
Now to our souls Thyself reveal ;  
Thy mighty working let us feel,  
*And know that we are born of God.*”

It may be still thought that there is not sufficient warrant for the principle of interpretation now urged ; and that this passage may have reference to baptismal service. But has there been any adequate estimate of the consequences which, in logical sequence, follow from such position. There could not possibly be a more direct way to the demonstration of *baptismal regeneration*.

“Buried with Him” is a great verity of personal salvation. But the baptism of water is the agency by which this great and glorious work has been effected and accomplished. Therefore we are saved by the application of water. The Sacramentarian would be well satisfied to entrench his pernicious system in a position of such security and strength.

The congruity of the principle of interpretation contended for in this passage, and its complete conformity, to the whole analogy of faith, become at once apparent, and if additional proof, the positive testimony of scripture, be needed, then “*by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body*” that is into Christ.

What then becomes of the whole fabric of exegesis and appeal based on the alternative principle of interpretation ? *It vanishes like the mist from the mountain brow.*

## IV. BORN OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT.

The Baptism of the Holy Ghost, as the grand and glorious distinction of Christianity, was announced by Christ to Nicodemus, in one of the most profound and spiritual of all his discourses: "Jesus answered and said unto him, verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." With startling effect upon the shivering ear of that man of the Pharisees, scrupulous in all that related to the ritual of the Church, fell the words of the Saviour: *Ye must be born again.* There was no attempt to tone down the impressive solemnity of this authoritative utterance, "Verily, Verily"—Amen, Amen—"I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

The profound significance of these words, *born of water and the Spirit*, can only be understood from the standpoint occupied by Nicodemus. Jesus spoke of a baptism of fire. To the Hebrews that symbol was hallowed. The burning bush of Horeb, the pillar of fire in the wilderness, and the Shekinah cloud were the consecration and the explanation: so of this figurative utterance of the Saviour, *born of water*. Its significance could not be misunderstood. To the mind of Nicodemus it would be immediately suggestive of the "clean water" which sanctified to the purifying of the flesh. The heifer, all red from horn to hoof, and without blemish, when found amongst the herds of Israel, was slain, consumed upon the altar of burnt-offering, and the ashes, the concentration of the offering, were mingled with water from a running stream. This was technically "clean water." It was the water of *sacrifice*. It takes us directly to the altar and to the atonement—to

the water and the blood—from the Saviour's side which flowed. "I saw it," John testified; "I saw that pierced side, that opened fountain, that mingled current."

But, while the *ashes* from the sacrificial altar, suggestive of *pardon*, pointed to the "cross and passion" of our blessed Redeemer, the *water* from the running brook, typical of *purity*, in perfect correspondence, as a symbol, with the baptismal element, has direct reference to the saving, sanctifying operations of the ever-blessed Spirit of God.

Thus we have not only *relative* change, reconciliation through Christ: but *real* change: regeneration by the Holy Ghost—*born of the Spirit*. There is mystery in this change—this renewal of the heart by the Holy Spirit—this transformation of the soul into a living temple for God. But there are mysteries in the world around us,—that something which we call speech, a mere wave of sound, a pulsation of the atmosphere, will transmit from one mind to a thousand the same thoughts. An operator at Valencia, sitting at the end of a cable, the other end of which is in the depths of the vast Atlantic Ocean, finds himself, at midnight, watching intently the delicate magnet, disturbed by the influences of the sea, by a tiny flash of light, suddenly placed in communication with men separated from him by a vast expanse of stormy waves. There is mystery in such communication, but the fact is none the less real. "The wind bloweth," the Saviour said, in this midnight interview upon the Mount of Olives: the wind moaned through the Valley of Kedron, rustled amongst the branches of the grove, beat coldly upon the brow of Nicodemus, but who could explain the law of that midnight breeze? The laws which govern the motion of winds and the course of

storms have been closely investigated, and are partially understood, but the rising and falling of gentle breezes, and their frequent changes, will, probably, forever remain a mystery.—“The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”

“*The Spirit answers to the blood.*”

##### 5. A FIGURE CORRESPONDING TO BAPTISM.

A favorite mode, more ingenious than ingenuous, involving a *suppressio veri*, always discreditable in a witness, sworn to the whole truth, has been to accumulate scraps and shreds of paragraphs and sentences, from voluminous writings of able and learned theologians and expositors ; and to parade them as *clouds of witnesses*. It is not always easy, in such multifarious and not unfrequently mutilated fragments, by comparison with the deliberate and definitely formulated judgments and opinions of the writers themselves, to ascertain their real value ; but confessedly when such “witnesses” are brought into court there ought to be *no lie forced upon their lips*. They should be allowed in their vernacular to tell the whole truth.

“It is *probable*,” says Dr. Adam Clarke, following previous expositors, who supposed that there might be allusion to an ancient practice of immersion, “that the Apostle here alludes to the mode of administering baptism by immersion, the whole body being put under water.” To an intelligent audience the above sentence was quoted as an embodiment of Dr. Adam Clarke’s opinion. To the important qualification of the passage which follows immediately, there was not the faintest allusion. The bulk of the people present at that time,

not having the Commentary for reference, could only carry away one impression. But what must have been the feeling of indignation, with the few who consulted and compared authorities, when they came to read the whole passage—calling for special attention because emphasized by the use of *italics*: “I say it is *probable* that the Apostle alludes to this mode of immersion; but it is not absolutely *certain* that he does so, as some imagine; for in the next verse, our being incorporated into Christ by *baptism* is also denoted by our being *planted*, or rather *grafted together in the likeness of his death*; and Noah’s Ark, *floating upon the water*, and *sprinkled by the rain from heaven*, is a figure corresponding to *baptism*.”

The great Wesleyan Commentator generously, but as we have seen from mistake, made the concession, as above stated, and also in the parallel passage of *Colossians*. He believed that there was *probable* allusion to immersion—*probably*, as in Wesley’s note, the *ancient Jewish purifications* were in mind—because “some do *imagine it*.”

The concession is quoted without any cognizance of the accompanying argument: sufficiently cogent and *positive*, we should say, to balance all *probabilities* and even *certainties* that rest only upon *imagination*.

#### VI. EXIGENCY, FACT AND INFERENCE.

The first pastoral duty called for after exposition of the subject of baptism, early on the following morning, was the administration of baptism to one who, supposed to be *dying*—not by any means a solitary instance—could not by possibility have been baptized, except by affusion—with water.

The fact, in relation to spiritual interests involved, is not one of vital importance. Salvation is not a mere ritual. The dying thief, who first reviled and then believed, though baptism was out of the question, passed away from the cross of shame to the paradise of God. Even in regard to the baptism of the disciples of Jesus Christ, the silence of Scripture is complete. *Simon Magus, though baptized by an Apostle, was still in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity; and Cornelius and his friends, without any application of water, received the baptism of the Holy Ghost.*

The Church of Christ is built "upon the foundation of the *Apostles* and prophets." If immersion had been an imperative requirement, and mode in the outward rite an essential thing, we might have expected ample and explicit detail as to the manner in which the apostles were baptized. *They were at the foundation*, you know. Inexplicably, upon the immersionist theory and appeal, we have not even proof that they were ever baptized at all.

The bearing of the *fact*, previously indicated, upon the question at issue, however, must be sufficiently evident. Can we admit, in harmony with our convictions, of the infinite wisdom of the Redeemer, that if *immersion* were the only valid mode of baptism, an ordinance should meet us, at the threshold of the Christian Church, with which, in the case of thousands, compliance was an utter impossibility?

The glorious dreamer, John Bunyan, though a Baptist, in his great allegory, following closely the word of God, took his pilgrims all the way from the city of destruction to the celestial city, and, in all their *progress*,

we meet with no flood until, in the deep, dark river of death, they finished their earthly pilgrimage, were welcomed by the shining ones, and then went up through the golden gates into the city of the Great King.

Very apposite to the subject, in view of numerous assumptions,\* looked at from this and other standpoints, are the eloquent words of the illustrious Baptist minister, Robert Hall :—slightly softened in this closing quotation—“ Let him reflect on the enormous impropriety of demanding a greater uniformity among candidates for admission into the Church militant, than is requisite for a union with the Church triumphant—of claiming from the faithful, while encompassed with darkness and imperfection, more harmony and correctness of sentiment than is necessary to qualify them to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of God—of pretending to render a Christian society on enclosure more sacred than the abode of Divine Majesty—and of investing any little teacher with the prerogative of repelling from his communion a Howe, a Leighton, or a Brainard. *Transubstantiation presents nothing more revolting to the dictates of common sense.*

#### VII. DISPENSATION OF THE SPIRIT.

It is impossible not to be profoundly impressed in many a prayer-service, with the earnestness and tremulous fervor of petition for the *baptism* of the Holy Ghost. Have we warrant for such pleading ? Are we in accord with the teachings and testimonies of the inspired word of God ?

\* One of the most amiable and eloquent ministers I have known, ventured when *convalescent* to preach on the Sabbath, and afterwards to administer the rite of baptism, by immersion; the next day, in his golden prime, he died—the direct consequence of imprudence.



We live under the dispensation of the spirit. The great substantial blessings of Pentecost are unexhausted and inexhaustible, and we believe to us and ours:—

“The apostolic promise given.”

According to the sacred record when, at the inaugural of Christianity, the baptism was first received, “they were all filled with the Holy Ghost;” and, indicative of undiminished privilege, the Apostle Paul, writing to the Church at Ephesus, earnestly enjoined upon them: to “*be filled with the Spirit.*” We have thus, in the phraseology of inspired exhortation, an ample vindication of the *form of supplication*, in relation to the *baptism* of the Holy Spirit, to which we are accustomed in services of prayer. Who shall dare to place limitation where the terms of gospel are without restriction? The great promise of this dispensation, “I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh,” has not yet received its full accomplishment: and, until then, we are justified in asking and expecting in richer plenitude: “Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted as a forest.”

One more promise from the lofty and magnificent predictions of Isaiah, who by the golden-mouthed Chrysostom was spoken of as “the cloud of God,” will be amply sufficient in illustration of exalted privilege, and of confident expectation: “And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion and upon all her assemblies a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire; for upon all the glory shall be a defence.” The imagery of such promises and predictions, involving in their accomplishment a glorious bap-

tism of the Holy Ghost and of fire, has by a natural transition passed into Christian language and literature; and, in the hymns of the Church, has found fitting application:

“ O, that he now from heaven might fall  
And all our sins consume;  
Come, Holy Ghost, for Thee we call,  
Spirit of burning come.”

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## CHAPTER VI.

### SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

“ *For the promise is unto you and to your children.*”—  
*Acts 2: 39.*

“ *For of such is the kingdom of God.*—*St. Mark 10: 14.*

“ *And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.*”—*St. Matthew 18; 5.*

“ *But bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*”—*Eph. 6: 4.*

“ *One common note on either lyre did strike.*”—*Dryden.*

#### I. THE KEY-NOTE.

The chief point at issue, in regard to *subjects*, is involved in the relationship of children to the Church of Christ: Have we any thing of definiteness and distinctness of teaching upon this question?

In relation to *mode* we have found, in evangelical promise, a distinctive utterance, the vibrations of which through all dispensations, and in varied revelations, have been attuned to the most absolute harmony. Is

there in relation to *subjects* any "*certain sound*" which comes to us as the authoritative *voice of God*, and strikes home to the great heart of the Church. The statue of Memnon, at Thebes, on the banks of the Nile, according to ancient legend, remained silent and impassive while the cold shadows of night rested upon it; but when struck by the first bright beams of morning light the marble breathed and gave forth its wondrous vibrations and mystic harmonies of sound. The infallible oracles of God are not, upon this important inquiry, mute and dumb because of deep shadows and the dark uncertainty of night.

From the region of obscurity and of uncertainty the whole question has been, by inspired teaching and the proclamation of heavenly law, lifted up into the broad, bright, blessed, sunlight, *the noontide radiance of revealed truth*, positive privilege, and Gospel Day. In explanation of the New Dispensation, of the gift of the Holy Ghost, of the laws of the kingdom, of the range and rights of subjects, of the conditions of evangelical acceptance, and of the terms of family relationship, the Apostle Peter, at a time when passover memories—the *sprinkled* blood, the salvation of their children, the destroying angel, passing over the dwellings of Israel, and smiting the first-born of Egypt,—recently solemnized, were fresh in their recollection,—emphatically affirmed: *The promise is unto you AND TO YOUR CHILDREN*. The key-note was sounded in the first message.

## II. A COVENANT GOD.

It is impossible to hear the distinct utterance of St. Peter at Pentecost, "unto you and to your children," without being reminded of the provision and privilege of ancient covenant.

The cardinal promise is in exact accordance with previous stipulation: "And I," said the Lord God unto Abraham, "will establish my covenant between Me and thee, *and thy seed after thee* in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." The Lord promised to be a God unto Abraham and his seed; and the Gospel promise is unto you and to your children. The only distinctive change, apart from the local, temporal, inferior blessings then promised, was in the covenant-sign,—from circumcision to baptism; and for this according to Rabbinical authorities, the baptism of proselytes, after the Captivity, of families, men, women and children, would be a general preparation. This aspect of the question, the full force of which, unless, putting ourselves in thought in the place of the Jews, who, regarding this promise made to their fathers as an inalienable birth-right, listened to the Apostle Peter at Pentecost—has been explicitly affirmed by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians: "That the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, etc. For as many of you as have *been baptized into Christ* have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, *then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*"

*In every covenant of God, made with his people, infants have been included.*

In the *original covenant* of Eden children were comprised; and upon "them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgressions," the consequences of disobedience were directly entailed. It was, therefore, a fundamental and correlative necessity of that divine

scheme, in which "grace did much more abound," that each successive covenant of salvation should be comprehensive as the Fall. Thus "in Christ, the tribes of Adam boast more blessings than their fathers lost."

The covenant made with *Noah* was of this distinctive character: "I establish my covenant with thee and with thy seed." "Behold," said the Lord God unto *Abraham*, "I establish my covenant with thee, and with thy seed after thee." In the *Mosaic* covenant, they are represented as "standing before the Lord their God, with their little ones."

The last "*New Covenant*" intimation, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, is that of comprehensiveness: "*from the least to the greatest.*" Is there anything in the New Testament to traverse Old Testament covenant, or to collide with evangelical promise? All convictions of consistency of divine procedure constitute a standing protest against such supposition.

### III. THE VOICES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

In *choral* execution there may be a multitude of voices and many instruments, the soft lute, the silvery cymbal, and the organ's majestic roll—"all the forms and forces of sound, dual, semichoral, antiphonal response, burst and swell of voice and instrument, attenuated cadence, apostrophe and repeat, united and full harmonious combination"—yet, with exquisite accent and perfect precision, each note of melody obtains clear and accurate expression.

In the Old Testament, we have the voices of patriarchal ages and of prophetic times—covenant, command, and promise. In "times past" and in "divers manners God spake unto the fathers by the prophets." At Pen-

tecost listening to St. Peter, we stand on the threshold of a new dispensation—that of the Son of God. But, there is a profound and glorious sense in which the Church of Christ is built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets. Before we turn away, from the rapt utterances of inspired men, it is well that we should ponder their testimony: “unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves but *unto us* they did minister the things.”

The promise of which St. Peter spoke, in exposition of the gift of the Holy Ghost, chords in beautiful harmony with the divine declaration, as spoken by the prophet: “For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.”

Promise can never in the Covenant of God collide with command; and, accordingly, the “promise of the Father,” unfolded by the Apostle at Pentecost, embodies and crystalizes the very spirit and essence of former injunction: “For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children: that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children; That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.”

“Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, *with* all the men of Israel,

Your *little ones*, your wives, and thy stranger that

is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water :

That thou *shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath*, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day :''

Thus in the Old Testament we have varied voices : but from each immortal bard, and from each consecrated lyre, there sounds "one common note" "*That they might set their hope in God.*"

#### IV. IDENTITY OF THE CHURCH.

It is not without significance that such phrases as "Jewish Church" and "Christian Church," are not to be found in the sacred Scriptures. "Nor," says Doane, "is such form of words : as the *Church of Christ*, to be met with in the Bible. It was always the *Church*, or the *Church of God.*"

Granting the identity of the Christian Church—*demonstrated* by the Apostle Paul, in his masterly and conclusive argument of the Olive Tree, in which, though original branches were broken off because of unbelief, and, upon a corresponding principle of faith, new ones grafted in, through all developments and transitions the trunk and roots remained unchanged—its essential identity unimpaired—there was, upon the supposition of *reversal* in relationship of children, an imperative necessity for the repeal of former law. But the total silence of Revelation, in regard to any covenant-change in this direction, affords the strongest presumptive evidence of the divine purpose to perpetuate former right and privilege ; and there was therefore no necessity for additional enactment. What force in court of law, in a case involving the rights of infants and minors, and their legal

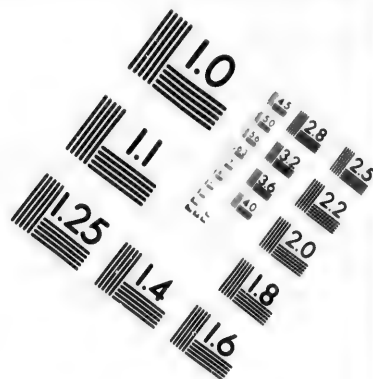
status in this Island, would there be in the plea: we are under a new and more extensive political dispensation; and since Confederation there has been no direct and positive legislative for the benefits of the class concerned: therefore their status and their legal rights are nihil? If there has been *no act of repeal* the old statute law of the colony remains in full force under the new *regime*; and according to its provisions and stipulations adjudication will be made and rights sacredly vindicated.

If there linger still a doubt as to the *identity* of the "Church of God," through all dispensations, that doubt vanishes before the authoritative and masterly statement of the subject, by the Apostle Paul, in the Epistle to the Ephesians: "Ye are fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundations of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the Chief Corner Stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

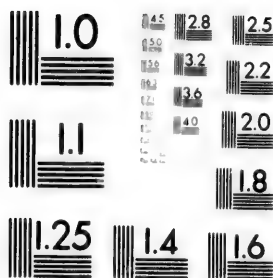
The Apostle's ideal of the "Church of God" was that of a gorgeous temple, fitted and framed, not of cedar and marble but "living stones"—its courts thronged with worshippers: no more strangers and foreigners—its altars flaming with love and devotion, prayer and praise, incense and a pure offering—its splendor the glory of the Lord. But at the very foundation of the Church, bearing the weight of the mighty structure are the Apostles and *Prophets*."

Through the golden *gate way* of appointed ordinance and initiatory rite, in virtue of unchanging covenant stipulation, for thousands of years, the people of God

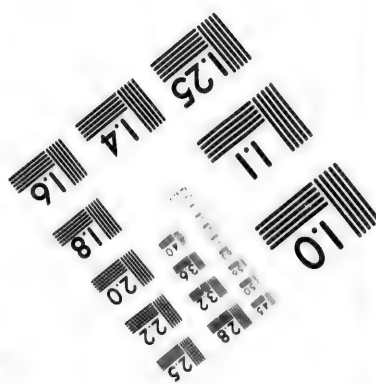




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passed into the brightness and glory of Divine Presence. They took, in solemn dedication, their "little ones" with them; and sacredly resolved: "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord." Has that gate of God's temple ever been authoritatively and formally closed? Was there ever inscribed above the portals of the Church of God, in interdict of infant dedication: *No admission here?* No! a thousand times, No! That has not been done in the national Church of England. It has never been done by the influential Presbyterian Church,—for that has always been distinctively distinguished for loyalty to the Word of God. It has not been done by the Congregationalists—the living representatives of the grand Puritans of Old England and of the Pilgrim Fathers of New England. The Methodist Church, carrying the triumphs of the Cross, the wide world over, promulgates the fundamental promise—unto you and *to your children*.

To the apostle Peter, in acknowledgment of memorable confession, the Saviour accorded one, *and but one*, special distinction, that of opening the kingdom,—the New Testament Dispensation to Jew and Gentile. "Thou art the Christ the Son of God," was the testimony, of Peter. And Jesus said, "Thou art Peter,"—a name which signifies *rock*—with thy name corresponds thy confession; and, "upon this rock," the fundamental doctrine of Christ's divinity, embodied and expressed in the testimony, "I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Then came the declaration of proposed investiture: "And I will give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt build on earth shall be built in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven; Matt. 16: 19. The

keys of gates were, in ancient times and still are, the emblem of official constituted *authority*. Oriental keys, were very different from Italian pictures of St. Peter's keys. The imagery of the prophet—the key of the house of David will I *lay upon his shoulder*, so shall he open and none shall shut—was in literal keeping with actual fact.

At Pentecost the *gates* “of the kingdom” the Gospel Dispensation, were to be opened. Christ has delegated authority to his servants for this purpose. They are to open “*and none shall shut.*” St. Peter in virtue of Christ's investiture, claims the distinction of first opening the portals of the Church to Jew and Gentile. I see him there standing at the threshold of the New Dispensation. The “keys of the kingdom,” are upon his shoulder. The emblem of authority is not carried there as an empty, unnecessary badge.

The massive apparatus in which there has been perfect adaptation presents no difficulty. The portals of the kingdom are thrown wide open. Shall we enter? anxiously inquire the multitudes of penitents. Yes, and be *baptized every one of you*—just what missionaries of the Church are saying to-day—when like the Apostle, they are opening their commission for the first time. Can our friends in many lands obtain access? Yes “all that are afar off”—from Orient to Occident.

But most essential of all, may the little ones enter? Yes! emphatically and assuredly: “for the promise is unto you and to *your children.*”

#### V. “OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD.”

The relation of children to this economy of grace, the spiritual kingdom of the Redeemer, was very strikingly exemplified, and very explicitly stated, in the

personal ministry of Christ. The "blessing of the little children" has formed a fitting theme for poet and painter. It has been woven into immortal song. It has been limned by the pencil of glowing genius. But, after all, the efforts and aspirations of art and genius, of story and of song, there has been nothing yet produced comparable, in power and enduring interest, to the simple, artless, but exquisitely beautiful, narratives of the evangelists. According to Luke; "they brought unto Him *also infants* ; and *Jesus called them unto Him.*" "In Mark, however," says Dr. David Brown, *in loco*, we have a most precious addition. "But when Jesus saw it *He was much displeased*, and said unto them : *Suffer the little children, ta paidia, to come unto me, and forbid them not.*" What words are these from the lips of Christ ! The price of them is above rubies. But the *reason* assigned, in the words that follow, crowns the statement — *for of such is the kingdom of God.* But the action that followed is the best of all : *And He took them up in His arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.* Did not the grave mistake of the disciples, which so *much displeased* the Lord Jesus Christ, consist just in the thought that infants should not be brought to Christ, *because only grown up people could profit by Him.* That explanation, correctly stated, would put into the mouth of the Great Teacher the purely absurd proposition : "Suffer the children to come unto me, because believing adults who *resemble* them in moral disposition, are proper subjects of the Kingdom of God." The Saviour was not furnishing reason for receiving persons of child-like character ; but for *receiving and blessing the children themselves.*

There might be mistake in the reception of adults. "Verily I say unto you," Jesus said, "whosoever shall

not receive the kingdom of God, as a little child shall not enter therein." Instead of the little children becoming like the disciples, in order to enter the kingdom of God, in earth or heaven, in grace or glory, *the disciples must then become like the little children.*

Before turning away from "that sweet story of old," in such consummate harmony, and delightful accordance, with all other grand and glorious teachings and testimonies of the word of God, let us note once more its distinctive features.

Hebrew parents brought their children to Christ, and were rebuked by the disciples. The disciples were as apparently contracted in their views as some Christian people of our times. "But when Jesus saw it He was much displeased." In one or two other passages that word *éganaktesè*, was displeased, is used by the evangelists: when at Bethany, the alabaster box was broken and the costly fragrance poured upon the head and feet of the Saviour, the disciples had much *indignation*; and when, at the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the children shouted Hosannah: the Priests and Pharisees were displeased. Only once, however, is this word applied to Jesus: not when despised and betrayed and scourged and condemned and crucified, but, when the disciples rebuked those that brought their children. Jesus *éganaktesè*—"was displeased"—had, as rendered in the other passage, "much *indignation*." He said unto them: "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not: *for of such is the kingdom of God.*"\* That expression is the New Testament phrase for the

\*"Of such is the Kingdom of heaven; not of such only as were like these infants. For if *they themselves* were not fit to be subjects of that Kingdom, how could others be so because they were like them?"—Wesley.

Church of God, the Gospel Church, and here we have not simply inference, but explicit *authoritative* statement. We are encouraged and authorized to receive the little ones, by the initiatory rite of baptism, into the Kingdom of God upon earth; and we are assured that, if taken from us by death, as thousands are, in virtue of the free gift which has come upon all, of their salvation into the Kingdom of God in heaven. The blessing of Jesus was no sentimental unmeaning act; and *whom Christ blesses man may receive*. In the very next narrative, in each of the synoptic Gospels, we read of the young man who came to the Saviour by the way. Earnest, enthusiastic, correct in creed, and of unexceptionable deportment; the Master looked upon him and loved him; but *he could not receive him*. He could not bless him as he blessed the little ones. In their relation to the Kingdom there was fundamental difference. The children were welcomed, but of the other the Lord could only say it was *hard* "to enter the Kingdom of God."

The example and utterances of Christ, in this delightful and influential episode of his personal ministry are authoritative and conclusive in regard to the children.

He was much displeased with his Disciples for putting obstacles in the way of the little children. But "it is an acknowledged fact that when any sin is forbidden the contrary duty is *commanded*."

Therefore the rebuke of Jesus was equivalent to *command*, and carries with it the *duty* of offering infants up to Him.

The Saviour said in exposition and in explanation of the kingdom, of the laws by which it shall be governed, and of the *subjects* which it should comprehend "of such is the kingdom of God."

The rite of *initiation* into that kingdom was *baptism*.

The children, according to the positive assertion of Christ, belong to the kingdom.

The *kingdom*, and the right of initiation, which is nothing more than recognition of privilege, *belongs to the children*—and to such as shall become like them.

Therefore, *children are proper subjects for baptism*.

Children that die in infancy are because of "the abundance of grace" received to exalted place in the Kingdom of God in heaven.

Children that *live* are in virtue of the same "gift of righteousness," only forfeited by actual transgression, members of the Kingdom of God upon earth.

Baptism is the only ordinance of God by which right and recognition can be publicly and scripturally declared.

*Therefore, Children are proper subjects for Christian baptism.*

#### VI. "AND FORBID THEM NOT."

Turning from the Gospel narrative, with its touching records of the Redeemer's love, and his words of immortal tenderness, to the annals of modern Christian enterprise, in the great North West of our own country, we meet with a beautiful incident,—illustrative of the solicitude, in their isolation, of converted Indians for their children, which even an inspired evangelist would have found satisfaction in recording:

"One morning, just at daybreak, during the homeward journey we were accosted by a band of Indians, who, having heard from some hunters that the mission-



ary had passed that way a few days before, had come and encamped at a narrow pass through which our route lay for the purpose of having their children baptized. We responded to their signals to land ; and there upon the barren rocks, with the blue heavens above us for covering, and the rushing stream as our font, we performed the solemn rites. A father and mother brought their little girl a distance of two hundred miles for this purpose. We gladly baptized the little one, giving her the name of Elizabeth, after which the parents immediately started off on their homeward journey."

Could that scene have been displeasing to the Lord of Glory, who folded little ones in his arms, and laid his hands upon them and blessed them ? Could "any man forbid water that these should not be baptized ?"

One incident, because of its unique interest, has been culled from the annals of Mission work in our own country. But the thought takes a wider range. All the great Evangelical denominations, with one exception, cherish solicitude in regard to the dedication of infants to God. What multitudes are thus brought in faith and prayer to the Saviour ; and Jesus bids them come. The statistics of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the United States, alone, shew that more than fifty thousand children are annually dedicated to God in the solemnity of baptismal administration.\* What accession from the

\* The Methodist Episcopal Church, North, which does not include Southern Methodism, in the United States, for 1877, reported upwards of 56,000 infants. The *total* membership, of all the Methodism of the United States, according to Dr. DePuy, in *Quarterly* is 3,293,469. For the other evangelical churches, Baptists, Presbyterian, Congregationalist and Protestant Episcopal, *unitedly*, the number of communicants, reported is 3,647,904...

ranks of children are being constantly made to the redeemed throng before the throne of God. Out of 10,746 deaths, which in one year were recorded in the City of Glasgow, the Commercial metropolis of Scotland, 3,963 were children *under two years* of age—more than one-third of the whole.

“In that beautiful place He is gone to prepare,  
For all who are washed and forgiven;  
And many dear children are gathering there,  
For of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

“Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say, unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.”

#### VII. POSITIVE AUTHORITY.

Positive authority for the admission of children into recognized relationship to the Christian church, we have from the lips of Jesus. Mistakes may be made in the reception of adult candidates into church membership; but in regard to the other class there can be no possibility of deception. It is questionable if language would admit of a declaration more distinct and positive than that of Christ, introduced with the solemn formula: “Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall *not* enter therein.” What could be more decisive than the Saviour’s memorable manifesto: “except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.” “*And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.*” To no act could higher recognition be accorded. Upon no service does Jesus Christ so deeply and so broadly put the stamp and seal of his approval. The little ones are to be *received* in Christ’s name. What ordinance of reception of *initiatory* kind has

been indicated? In what manner has the Church been authorized to comply with this sacred requirement? Are we at liberty to set aside and supersede appointed order and ordinance in the Church?

We are commanded to receive little ones in Christ's name. Baptism into the divine name, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is the only ordinance of initiation, reception, and dedication, appointed and instituted in the Christian Church.

*Therefore*, we are solemnly authorized, and positively commanded, to administer infant baptism.

Then, again, the *moral* relation of infants, to the Saviour and His kingdom, through the meritorious "cross and passion" of the blessed Redeemer is just the same as that of adult believers: Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Either we must incur the penalty of direct disobedience; we must substitute some human device for the appointed initiatory ordinance of the Church, which would be only an impertinence; or, we must respond to the positive teaching of Christ and, as He has *commanded* us, receive the little ones in His name.

#### VIII. APOSTOLIC COMMISSION.

The Commission claims special consideration: "Go ye therefore," said Jesus, and teach, *mathēteusate*, all nations, baptizing, *baptizontes*, them \* \* \* teaching, *didaskontes*, them &c.

Three things are solemnly enjoined in the Commission: *matheteuein*, baptizein, *didaskein*. 1. To disciple. 2. To baptize. 3. To teach.\*

\* Bloomfield.

The Jews made disciples to their faith, and in cases of proselytism, children were included with their parents.

In what sense then, it may be pertinently inquired, would the men to whom the Commission was given, in the first place, naturally and necessarily understand it? They were to make disciples: How? By baptism. To disciple: For what purpose? Teaching them. To disciple: Whom? All nations! The only limitation that would have been thought of, consequent upon their deeply-rooted prejudices, would have been to one nation—"to the Jew first." The Commission overleaped all barriers of clime, and race, and creed. Jesus said *all nations*: All! Were an act to pass the Dominion Legislature now in session, applying to all Prince Edward Island, declarative of personal right and privilege, universal in its terms: would not that legislation include children of all ages? Of course it would.

#### IX. "APOSTLES DOCTRINE:" LAW OF INFANT BAPTISM.

The New Testament dispensation was instituted, and the first converts continued steadfastly, in the "Apostles' doctrine." Here then we have the indication of *crucial* test. We meet and mingle with the crowd at Pentecost. The recent solemnities of Passover observance have afresh moved and thrilled our hearts. The blood which saves and sanctifies has been *sprinkled* for a testimony upon lintel and door posts. The thought of the children is uppermost at this moment. Tremulous with feeling we hear the words of St. Peter, in his first sermon: "Repent and be baptized every one of you." The rite of baptism, become so familiar in the numerous national ablutions, needs no explanation; and none apparently is given—except that they are to be bap-

tized "in the name of Jesus Christ." We have, however, an inquiry of supreme importance to make—uppermost at this moment. Tell us, Peter, what in this new era of privilege and blessing, in the Church of God, shall be the relation of the little ones? The answer is immediate, satisfying, conclusive: *The promise is unto you, and to YOUR CHILDREN.*

It is desirable, upon a point of such vital moment, that appeal should be made to the original text. The Greek *tekna*,—infants, children, descendants, posterity\*—fully authorizes and sustains the English version. The consonance of this promise with that of ancient covenant affords additional confirmation of teaching; "and Peter's reference to it is the first trill of its echo sounding down through the christian ages." How euphonious its accents; "*unto thee and to thy seed! Unto you and to your children!*"†

We are now prepared once again to accept the challenge in regard to *command*. According to an acknowledged canon of interpretation: *Promise is equivalent to command*. God's will through all the ages of revelation and inspiration, was distinctively and alternately made known by promise and command. Each and equally, they imply indisputable authority. Disregard and disobedience, in either case, involve peril and penalty. What then is the promise of which St. Peter authoritatively speaks? Definitely and distinctly, beyond

\* The primary meaning of *teknon* is child. It is derived from *tikto*, "*to bring forth*"—as in the Septuagint *etke*. Genesis iv: 1. It is used, in its native sense, Gen. iii: 17, "God said unto the woman—thou shalt bring forth children:—*teze tekna*. The Greek of the seventy, therefore gives the very word of St. Peter, in Acts, and also establishes the signification. Primarily it signifies children, in a more extended sense posterity.

† Doane p. 96.

a question: that, which in the plenitude of inspiration has just been spoken; "and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." "For," said he, in continuation of the same sentence, and in explanation of "the gift of God," "the promise is unto you and to your children." Ye shall receive it—that promise of the Father—that essential glorious baptism of the Holy Ghost—and your children shall receive it. The case is conclusive. The promise is equivalent to command. *Can any man then forbid water that these should not be baptized which receive the Holy Ghost as well as we?*

#### X. BAPTISMS OF HOUSEHOLDS.

Throughout the Acts of the Apostles we find that, whenever *congregational* ministry is the subject of sacred history, and the gospel was for the first time preached in a city, the first record of baptisms, as at Samaria, and as in all new missionary stations up to the present time, is that of their converts. But wherever the ministry of the Apostles had to do with home-life, we have then the church in the house, and the narrative of saving work includes the facts of households. Heads of families were converted and baptized, and their *households* were baptized with them—the Jailer *and all his* straight-way—Lydia *and her household*—Crispus with all his house—the household of Stephanas. Households may be found without children; but the membership of children in the family is the general law of life, and their absence the exception. There are unquestionably families unblest with children. We have been assured that such a *state of things* exists, to an extraordinary extent, in a neighboring congregation. But that is not to the purpose. "Through the entire history of the Old Testament Church, *the accession of a household to the*

*Lord's people necessarily included the infants of that household."* Upon the supposition that exclusion was the new Testament idea: Looking upon households of the New Testament in their representative character, *no language could have been more calculated to mislead or to pervert the right way of the Lord.* What are the facts? The narratives of baptism in the Acts of the Apostles are *nine* in all. They are doubtless intended to be representative in their character. To Cornelius it was said: "who shall tell *thee* words whereby *thou and all thy house* shall be saved." It is recorded, very significantly, of Lydia: that when the Lord "opened her heart," "*she* attended to the things spoken by Paul, and *she* was baptized and her household," and "*she* besought the Apostles," saying "If ye have judged *me* faithful to the Lord." Very plainly does the narrative throughout distinguish Lydia as the only *believer*. Either, we must assume the fact of children, in the *household* of Lydia, or the alternative fact that *adult* members were baptized in *unbelief*. The jailor was converted, and though his conversion is the only one plainly distinguished, in the narrative; yet, "he was baptized, *and all his, straightway.*" During the ministry of St. Paul, at Corinth, he baptized, as he tells us, very few; yet, of the number, there is special mention of "the household of Stephanas."

More than *one-third, nearly half*, of the New Testament narratives of baptism, designed for the guidance of the Church in all ages, are devoted to *examples* of households—with not an intimation of changed relationship. Think in contrast of the style adopted, in modern papers and periodicals, by those who repudiate infant-baptism!\*

\* The reference is purely to *reports* of christian work, which alone admit of comparison, and not to controversial notices.



"It surely is an extraordinary thing," says Dr. Wardlaw, writing many years ago, and the fact is even more patent to-day, "that in the journal and periodical accounts of Baptist missionaries, in heathen countries, we should meet with any thing of the kind. I question, whether in the thirty years of the baptist mission in India, there is to be found a single instance of the baptism of a household. When do we find a baptist missionary saying, "When she was baptized and her family"—or "I baptized the family of Krishnoo," or any other convert? We have the baptism of individuals; but nothing corresponding to the apostolic baptism of families. This fact is a strong corroborative proof, that there is some difference between their practice and that of the apostles. If the practice of both were the same, there might surely be expected *some little* correspondence on the facts connected with it.

#### XI. ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

The appeal throughout this investigation has been made to the word of God. The *voice* of ecclesiastical history, however, is in such perfect *consonance* with the teachings of scripture that we are compelled to heed the testimony.

The prevalence of infant baptism at the time of *Augustine's* ministry, A.D. 634, is not disputed. He speaks of the baptism of infants as an *apostolic tradition handed down and held by the universal church*.

"And if any one," he says, against the Donatists, "do ask for divine authority in this matter, though that *which the universal church practices, which has been instituted by Councils*, but has always been observed, most justly believed to be a thing delivered, or handed down by the *authority* of the apostles, &c."—*Letters*.



In the third century a question arose amongst the then influential African churches whether a child might be baptized before the eighth day. A council of sixty-six bishops convened under *Cyprian*, A. D., 253, gave it as their unanimous judgment that baptism might be administered before that age. The *validity* of infant baptism was not even questioned. *Origen*, who lived within a century of the apostolic age, affirms "that *little children are baptized* agreeably to the usage of the church; and that the church received it as a tradition from the apostles that baptism should be administered to children." This tradition, according to Eusebius, was received by Origen from a pious ancestry. *Tertullian*, who lived some years earlier than Origen, alone opposed the baptism of infants. He refers to the custom as one of general observance; and in his opposition does not refer to Scripture. He took the ground that the blessing of baptism once forfeited was never retrieved. He contended for the *delay* of baptism in different cases, including infants, unmarried persons and widows. *Justin*, who was contemporary with Polycarp, the disciple of St. John, whose First Apology appeared about A.D. 150, takes the chain of ecclesiastical evidence up to the apostolic age, testifies, in his Apology: "Numbers of men and women sixty and seventy years old, *who from childhood were discipled to Christ—hoi et paidon ematheusan te Christo*—still continue uncorrupt." *Irenæus*, who belongs to the earlier part of the Second Century affirms: Christ came to save all persons through himself; all I say who through him are *regenerated to God—renascuntur in Deum*—infants and little ones, and children, and youth and the aged. The phrase of Irenæus, "regenerated to God," was constantly applied to baptism at

that time, and indicates the general prevalence of this custom. The word used by Justin, in his Apology, for *discipleship* is the same as that of the Commission.

Can we believe that if infant-baptism had not been of apostolic authority that all history would have been *silent* in regard to its introduction? If a practice of such important character, in violation of apostolic teaching and traditions, had been *foisted* upon the Church; would not *the voice of protest have sounded along the ages?*

"On the opposite side of the question," says Turner in "*Divine Validity of Infant Baptism*," we have seen nothing "to invalidate the following conclusions:"

"*First, during the first four hundred years, from the formation of the Christian Church, Tertullian alone urged the delay of baptism to infants, and that only in some cases; and Gregory only delayed it, perhaps, to his own children. But neither any society of men, nor any individual denied the lawfulness of baptising infants.*

"*Secondly, in the next seven hundred years, there was not a society or an individual who even pleaded for this delay; much less who denied the right or the duty, of infant baptism.*

"*Thirdly, in the year 1120, one sect of the Waldenses*"—a mere fragment—declared against the baptism of infants; because *they suppose them incapable of salvation.* But the main body, "of the Waldensian Church," rejected the opinion as heretical; and the sect which held it soon *came to nothing.*

"*Fourthly, the next appearance of this opinion was in the year 1522:*"—the Anabaptists of Munster in Germany.

"The first Baptist Church in England appears to have been founded between the years 1633 and 1649."

In explanation of the fact that a small section of the Waldensian Church declared against the baptism of infants, it may be stated that the Petro-brussians, followers of Peter de Bruis, a very small faction—"not more than a *thirtieth* or *fourtieth* part of the whole" held that infants not being capable of salvation ought not *therefore* to be baptized. The great body of the Waldensian witnesses for the truth were Pedo-baptists.

"If these historical facts be correct, and that they are so is just as well attested as any facts whatever in the annals of the Church, the amount of the whole is conclusive, is *demonstrative* that for *fifteen hundred years* after Christ, the practice of infant baptism was universal; that to this general fact there was absolutely no exception, in the whole Christian Church, which in *principle or even analogy* can countenance in the least degree, modern Antipedobaptism"—vide Prof. Miller.

#### SUMMARY OF SUBJECTS.

1. Chord and Consonance of all voices and testimonies of Revelation and Inspiration.
2. Authoritive Apostolic Announcement: "Unto you *and to your children.*"
3. Stipulation of the "everlasting Covenant:" "Unto thee *and to thy seed.*"
4. Promise equivalent to command. It involves faithfulness on God's part, to fulfil what He has promised, and faithfulness also on man's part—in compliance with *condition* expressed or understood.
5. The identity of the Church unimpaired—built upon the foundation of the *Apostles and Prophets.*

6. Command and promise and established testimony in Jacob, in Pentateuch and Psalms and Prophecy, speak with one accord: "He *commanded* our fathers that they should make them known to their *children*."

7. Jesus took up infants in His arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them; and, whom the Saviour blesses and receives, *the Church may receive and acknowledge*.

8. "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of *such is the Kingdom of God*."

9. Infants are not excluded from the Kingdom of God in heaven: Why exclude them from *recognition* in the kingdom of God upon earth?

10. The Church by the *positive* teaching of Christ has been authorized to *receive* the little ones in His name—and such *adults* as may, in *moral* disposition, resemble them.

11. The little child, in the fulness of its interest, and all benefits and blessings, comprehended in the kingdom, is the model of discipleship; and unless *adults* be converted and become as little children, even if immersed in an ocean of water, they "shall not enter into the kingdom."

12. Most of Evangelical Denominations of Christ attach the utmost importance to the solemnity of infant baptism; and we cannot believe that nine-tenths of the Lord's people, throughout the world, have been suffered greatly and grievously, from Apostolic times until now, to misinterpret His work and, palpably, to misunderstand the object of His appointed ordinance.

13. The Acts of the Apostles chronicle services of baptism in the New Testament Church; and a large pro-

portion of them were of *households*: Was the language employed by the sacred writer, which from the usage of initiating households, including infants, into the ancient church, evident from indisputable Rabbinical authority, had current and established meaning—a *usus loquendi* which could not be ignored—purposely designed to mislead?

14. Do the annals of Baptist enterprise furnish records of the baptism of households in exact harmony of phrase with the New Testament?

15. Promise equivalent to command: The promise was spoken by St. Peter at Pentecost. "And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Ye shall receive it and your children shall receive it: for the promise is unto you and to your children. *Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized which receive the Holy Ghost as well as we?*

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## CHAPTER VII.

### OBJECTIONS TO INFANT BAPTISM.

"And His disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was much displeased."—*St. Mark.*

"Break but one  
Of a thousand keys, and the paining jar  
Through all will run."—*Whittier.*

*Many seriously inclined people run to infant baptism to satisfy a sense of duty in reference to their children.*—*Writer in Baptist London.* "Freeman."

Discordant notes are not pleasant to an ear attuned to melody; and never are the jar and dissonance of discord more sensitively felt than when they break in upon the grandeur of rolling harmonies. In the present chapter we have to listen to the voices of opposition and unbelief. The spirit of opposition, as exhibited in the ministry of Christ, has been very graphically described in the Gospel: "And they brought young children to Him that He should touch them; and His *disciples rebuked them.*" It has been said that history repeats itself. The words and acts of Jesus were so clear and decisive, and the testimony of God's word so full and complete, that, for nearly twelve centuries, the voice of opposition to bringing infants to the Saviour, was unknown in the Church. But in modern times, there are zealous disciples whose special mission and *distinctive* denominational existence are not unfairly represented by the Gospel record:—not an *enviable* one—and *His disciples rebuked those that brought them.*

As most prominent amongst objections the following may be noted:—

#### I. SILENCE OF SCRIPTURE.

Objection to the fact of Baptism taking the place of circumcision, as the *initiator* rite of the Church of God, has been urged.

*a* That the Scripture is silent concerning such a change; therefore no such change was made.

The Scriptural record of apostolic effort, and accessions of saved souls to the Church of Christ, extending over a period of *sixty* years, is *silent* concerning any *adult* baptism in a Christian Community. Even Timothy, who had known the truth from childhood, whom St.

Paul found at Lystra long after the Church had been there planted, and the peculiarities of whose case were specially favorable for such record, cannot be claimed as an example of adult baptism. The silence is profound. Is that utter *silence* to be accepted as conclusive evidence upon the subject?

But, instead of silence, in regard to the initiatory rite of membership in the Church, we have the positive affirmation: "As many as have been baptized into Christ," of which *water* is the sign and seal, "are Abraham's seed and heirs"—according to the Covenant promise—of which circumcision was the sign and seal. The Covenant of salvation in its glorious promises and provisions has not changed. One *seal* has been replaced by another—that is all:

A few months ago, in the Eastern Section of this Dominion, the discovery was made, in legal and literary circles that the Seal of the Province had been changed. The introduction of a *New Seal* had not been legalized by any special legislation. Did that *silent* substitution of one Seal for another invalidate thereby any important document? Was any covenant transaction by that means annulled? The application of this analagous fact, and the inference which it suggests, may be safely left to any intelligent student of this subject.

b That Timothy was circumcised twenty years after the institution of baptism; and therefore the one had not superseded the other. But the fact in Timothy's case is mentioned specially as an exceptional one. It was harmless, providential compliance, for the sake of greater usefulness, with a rite which, though obsolete in the christian economy, was deeply rooted in the pre-

ferences and prejudices of his countrymen. *Exceptio probat regulam*:—"the exception proves the rule."

## II. NO EXAMPLE.

Opposition to the doctrine of infant baptism, has usually shaped itself into syllogism:—

That ordinance of which no example is found in the New Testament does not belong to the Church: But there is no example of infant baptism; therefore, it is not of Christ.

Propositions of this class may be supplied to order. They are, as in Miltonic legend,

"Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks  
In Vallambrosa."

The usual assumption of the minor premise, which, when persisted in assumes an appearance of *presumption*, invalidates the affirmation.

No examples of infant baptism! And yet nearly half the representative examples, of the inspired record, are baptisms of *households*; and, if not enjoined as examples to us, of all the books that have ever been written, the Acts of the Apostles would be the most calculated to mislead. No examples! "They were all baptized" at the Red Sea; and in that baptism of God there were thousands of little ones.

That passage through the Red Sea, beneath pouring rain and drifting spray was baptism. The fact is also emphasized: "*All* were baptized." *Five times* in that brief record, it is most suggestively and significantly affirmed—*all* were under the cloud, *all* passed through the sea, *all* were baptized, &c. Example is asked for; and we are assured that, in that baptism of



God, infants as well as adults, "all were baptized." "Now," adds the apostle, with intensified emphasis, "*these things were our examples.*"

### III. NO COMMAND.

The position, in which error at this point seeks intrenchment, may be fairly and fully presented by the proposition :—

Baptism is a positive command : but the baptism of infants has not been commanded ; therefore, infant baptism is not of God.

The validity of the logic, and the value of the affirmation, may be tested by another proposition—perfect in coincidence and correspondence. The Sabbath is a positive institution : and for its observance there must be direct command. But no such command is contained in the New Testament ; therefore, the observance of the Sabbath is not of God. The conditions in this case are essentially the same as in the other. The change, from circumcision to baptism, in the *initiatory* rite of church-membership finds counterpart and exact equivalent in the change of the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first day of the week. Is the *obligation* of the Christian Sabbath to be lightly and loosely held ?

The sacred claim of the holy Sabbath, as in the ordinance of infant baptism, rests upon evidence which is *inferential, cumulative and conclusive*:

The Apostles of Jesus Christ, "filled with the Holy Ghost," led into all truth, were authoritatively, and in virtue of their sacred office, commissioned *to bind and to loose*—to appoint and to abrogate—to perpetuate and to annul. They had the distinct assurance that their

administration, under the guidance of an infallible spirit, should be ratified in heaven. But of the abrogation of the Sabbath, and of infant membership in the church, alike important institutions, we have not, either in the form of example or of precept, any record. We have intimation of changed conditions; but upon these ordinances, in all their integrity, we have the *imprimatur* of apostolic authority — deeply and indelibly stamped.

## IV. CANNOT BELIEVE.

But then it has been argued, the Gospel of Mark contains specific condition. "He that believeth shall be saved."\* The syllogism is summoned into service: Believing is necessary to baptism; infants are incapable of believing; therefore they are not proper subjects of baptism. The logic may be satisfactorily tested by another proposition of the same character and construction: Believing is necessary to salvation: but infants are incapable of believing; therefore infants are not saved."

"That which proves too much proves nothing."

The condition is not, however, he that believeth and afterwards shall be baptized; but he that believeth and is baptized. The Greek Aorist carries the idea of past time. The verb in the Greek text is *baptistheis*—Aorist, passive, participial. The condition, therefore, literally reads: "He that believeth, *having been baptized, &c.*" How definitely and distinctly this teaching of Christ meets and satisfies the case of many converts: as they seek closer communion with the visible church.

\* The last twelve verses of St. Mark's Gospel, though sanctioned by certain M.S.S., being considered an interpolation, will be omitted from the revised version.

They have bowed in prayer. They have believed with the heart unto righteousness. They were early dedicated unto God. *They have been baptized.* In personal public profession of faith in Jesus they avow the solemnity of baptismal obligation and, in *sacramental* service,—the elements of the broken body and shed blood,—tremulous with emotion and thrilled by hallowed memories of the garden, the cross and the sepulchre, they *assume* the appointed badge of discipleship. Blessed, thrice blessed, is that scene and service of renewed dedication and of covenant-obligation :

“ O happy band, that seals my vows  
To Him who merits all my love;  
Let cheerful anthems fill His house,  
While to that sacred shrine I move.”

#### V. SO FEW HOUSEHOLD BAPTISMS!

“ The fact” says the latest exponent of Baptist tenets in “ voice of God,” “ that so few household baptisms are *recorded* in the divine *record*, while so many thousand baptisms are *recorded* proves household baptism to be a rare occurrence, and in the few *records*, &c.”

With the quotation just made in which the *objection* in question finds formulated expression, a slight liberty, in the use of italics, has been exercised. Whatever transgressions of taste may be tolerated in the effusions of ordinary mortals, the “ voice of God” ought to reach us in satisfying style and until it does so, we really cannot accord to it any very special respect.

The objection: *Many thousand baptisms and so few households!* throws us back upon the Acts of the Apostles and the facts of the New Testament.

1. Three thousand converts baptized on the day of Pentecost. In the church of the prophets, children had

recognized right, and the tendency of the Gospel is to extend privilege. "Nothing" says Rev. J. C. Ryle, "would astonish a Jewish convert so much as to tell him his children could not be baptized. In fact I never heard of a converted Jew becoming a Baptist.

2. The baptism of the Samaritan converts: "they were baptized both men and woman." There has been stress put upon the omission of infants from the record. In the utter destruction of Ai, in which *infants* were included, it is said, "all that fell that day, *both men and women*, were twelve thousand." The phrase, of the Samaritan narrative, "from the least to the greatest," in all probability originated in household baptisms.

3. The baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch: as he traversed the *desert* "that goeth down to Gaza."

4. The baptism of Saul of Tarsus at Damascus.

5. The baptism of Cornelius: "thou and all thy house."

6. The baptism of Lydia "and her household."

7. The baptism of the Philipian jailor: "he and all his straightway."

8. The baptism of Corinthian converts: which included Crispus, "with all his house," and "also the household of Stephanas."

9. The baptism of John's twelve disciples at Ephesus.

These *nine baptismal services* comprise all the facts of the Acts of the Apostles and of the New Testament. They are all which find any permanent place in the inspired record. They extend over a period of thirty years; and have been selected as the pattern and model

for the administration of Christian baptism in every age of the Church.

The baptisms of Saul of Tarsus and of the Ethiopian Eunuch are of individual interest and character ; and the baptismal service at Ephesus was apparently an exceptional incident of apostolic ministry. In all the other narratives we have the idea ; and, omitting the Ephesian exception, *in the half of these records*, we have positive affirmation of *household baptism*.

But these baptismal services represent a vast number of others, possessing the same character solemnized by Apostles and Evangelists, during that period of thirty years mission and ministry : Are we not therefore, warranted in the belief, *based upon the proportion of inspired historic fact*, that of every thousand baptismal services, belonging to those years, *fully five hundred*, and probably a much greater proportion, *were household baptisms* ?

It is not suprising to learn, from Turner's "Divine Validity," that a gentleman who had formerly been a Baptist minister, compelled from conviction of principle to leave the denomination in explanation to his congregation, emphasised the fact :—"That in all the Baptist missionary reports, we never read of the baptism of whole households at one and the same time."

#### VI. THE TERMS OF THE COMMISSION ARE DEFINITE.

"Were not the apostles commanded to baptize all nations, and were not infants a part of the nation ? Yes, *and so are idiots and infidels.\**"

\* The voice of God on the Qualifications for membership in the visible Church of Christ &c., by pastor D. G. McDonald, Charlottetown, P.E.I.

Such is the inquiry, of the most recent interpreter of baptist principles, in that extraordinary publication, "The voice of God;" and such the severely repulsive reply : but

1. *Idiots* are not incapable of ultimate salvation, and they are fitting objects of compassion, divine and human; but in regard to the present life they are utterly helpless and hopeless. In the condition of infants there is nothing of the hopelessness of imbeciles.

2. *Infidels*, by the very term of the commission, because of defiance and disobedience, are doomed to damnation: are infants excluded "after the same manner of unbelief?"

The Saviour took up little children—described by St. Luke as infants, *brephe*—and blessed them; and according to St. Matthew, said: *for of such is the kingdom of heaven.* "tôn gar toioutôn estin he basileia tôn ouranôn."

The form of expression, in that authoritative, and emphatic declaration, in the original text of St. Matthew, is essentially that of the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs, is the kingdom of heaven: Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Two pictures are presented to our mental vision; Look on this and then on that:

In one group shadowed in chilling and repulsive forms, are infants, the objects of fond parental *hope* and affection; imbeciles, from whom all the brightness and sunshine of life have been excluded; infidels, hardened and impenitent unbelievers, condemned to eternal perdition.

In the other group, resplendent with the gentleness and tenderness of Jesus, we have a scene of imperishable interest: Infant heirs of immortality, in all the sweetness, purity, and innocence of their new lives radiant in beautiful promise, and rich in the boundless possibilities of their being, are brought into holy and blessed association with the "poor in spirit," "the pure in heart" and the heroic and heavenly minded sufferers for righteousness sake. They are inheritors and participators of like precious privilege and possession; for *theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Between the two systems of doctrine: the one in which infants are classed with imbeciles and unbelievers and the other, in which they are gathered and grouped with the patient, pure and good, there is an impassible gulf.

There are two *voices of God*, two schemes and systems of doctrine and faith: One comes to us, the authoritative manifesto of the Saviour's spiritual kingdom, from "the sermon on the mount," and the other from the "little tract."

We are compelled to the conviction that the voices, and the systems, as thus expounded, are utterly adverse and irreconcilable. There is a gulf between them, which no principle can bridge, and an antagonism, of essential idea, which can admit of no compromise.

It is no violation, therefore, of the law of charity, and of Christian courtesy, to stamp that passage—with its incongruous juxtaposition of infants with "idiots and infidels"—as unlovely, un Christ-like, an offence to pure sentiment—an insult to the Saviour and an injury to the denomination—which in other days, through its

exponents and representatives, has challenged and commanded esteem and respect.

It is refreshing, from such an interpretation of the "Voice of God," to read in contrast, upon the same subject, in the "Compendium of Christian Theology" lately published, the thoughtful and beautiful utterance of Dr. Pope :

"And the gentle theory of Christianity is that the influences of the spirit upon them will bless their instruction, amidst the Gospel ordinances, to their full participation, in all the blessings of both the visible and the invisible Church."\*

## NOTE.

Since the above lines were written "Bible Baptisma," has been put on my table. Conscious apparently that perversions and flippant remarks would prove offensive to persons of sober thought "he would simply say that the approbation of Jesus is infinitely more desirable than theirs." Are passages such as this likely to win the approbation of Jesus? Once, and only once, in Christs' earthly ministry, do we read that he was *displeased*, and that was because of the rebuke of those, who brought their *little children* to Him: Jesus is the same yesterday to-day and forever. That which *displeased* Him on earth is not likely to command His approbation now. Sooner than pen such a passage, grouping infants with "idiots and infidels," many a true and tender disciple of Jesus, in living sympathy with his Master would prefer, that his *right hand should lose its cunning*.

## VII. BRINGS NO BLESSING.

The objection that children subsequent to their dedication to God in baptism fall into sin—equally and



painfully true also in too many cases of adult baptism—springs from a fundamental mis-conception of the nature and design of baptism as a covenant-sign—the obligation and privilege of which, at the fitting time and place, by public profession of faith in Christ are recognized and acknowledged. Were the theory of baptismal regeneration, or a *water-salvation*, in question the objection would then be a valid and legitimate one. Circumcision in the ancient Church could not save; but it indicated *covenant-relationship*, and, as evidence of God's care and concern for the little ones of the families of Israel, could not but produce salutary impression upon the minds of devout and thoughtful parents. Baptismal regeneration, as a scriptural doctrine, we do not accept. The application of water washes away no stain, and in itself secures no blessing; but infant baptism, as a sign and seal of the relationship of children to this dispensation of salvation, we regard as the sacred ordinance of God. Under this economy of redemption, because of the free gift of righteousness which hath come upon all, where sin abounded grace doth much more abound; and, though "born in sin and shapen in iniquity," the little ones are not excluded from gracious communication. The provisions of redeeming mercy are commensurate with the race, and meeting us at the threshold of life, run parallel with all the lines of human existence. In the dedication of our children to God, in the sacrament of baptism, of which the application of water, as the outward sign of inward and spiritual grace, fervently implored, is only an incidental and subordinate consideration, we are constantly reminded of solemn and sacred parental obligation—publicly and prayerfully acknowledged; and confidently, therefore, may we expect accompanying ap-

proval and blessing:

“For 'twas to bless such souls as these,  
The Lord of angels came.

#### VIII. UNRECOGNIZED INFANT BAPTISM.

The objection has been urged that *practically* the evangelical churches of Protestantism do not recognize the membership of children.

It must be confessed that, in the past, churches have greatly failed in this duty. The old theory, which has not yet exhausted its evil and pernicious influences, was that the bright beautiful years of early life must of necessity be spent in the service of sin and Satan.

The mother of President Olin, a member of the Baptist Church, though a woman of decided piety, believed that children ought not to be religiously influenced. She did not, from *principle*, even teach them to repeat the Lord's prayer.

The most discouraging experiences of a very youthful membership in the Church, at that time sensitive and easily wounded, were the thoughtless utterances of really good christian people. They did not comprehend the right relationship of the children of the church to Christ; fearing that such early admission to recognized membership was premature, fraught with peril, and ought not to be encouraged; but the accessions, though almost regarded with suspicion, proved, in a few years, to be a rich and valuable acquisition to the church. The very persons moreover whose godly jealousy found expression in fears and misgivings, by a strange inconsistency, would frequently, in services of christian fellowship, testify to the fact that they could

not remember a time when they were not the subjects of the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit of God.

"Regeneration," says a recent writer, dates often from "so early a period that the time of change is entirely unknown to the subject of it. This has been the case with some of the most eminent saints that have ever lived. They began to love Jesus so early that they could remember no time when their hearts were not in loving sympathy with the Saviour: why may not this be the case usually, instead of being a rare exception?"

We have in the inspired volume memorable examples of early piety. The prophet Samuel was from his infancy dedicated to God. Jeremiah was "sanctified" from his birth. There is special recognition of the hereditary piety of Timothy—of "the unfeigned faith which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois and in thy mother Eunice." "*From a child*," says the Apostle, thou hast known the Holy Scriptures. These cases were not altogether exceptional; and were tenderness of feeling and the gracious impressions of early years, from the first dawning of capacity and responsibility, nurtured and directed; they would more frequently develop into convictions and habits of genuine piety and love to the Saviour. "Have ye never read," said Jesus to Chief Priests and Scribes, when they were displeased with the rapturous *hosannas* of the little children, in acclamation of the Saviour's entrance into the holy city. "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, Thou hast perfected praise."

Some of the most beautiful and attractive exhibitions of interest in church enterprise are of the character which Jesus approved and accepted. At an annual Missionary Meeting a few evenings since, when the con-

tributions of the *infant-class*, amounting to twenty-five dollars were presented, a little child of not more than four or five years of age, with a face of suffused rapture and a sweet and beautiful enthusiasm, exclaimed audibly and unconsciously: *That's my class*. Is not that identity of an infant class, with the church and with the cause of the Redeemer, in harmony with the genius of christianity and the teachings of inspired truth?

" And infant-voices shall proclaim  
Their young hosannas to His Name."

There have been on the part of the baptized children of the church, we have been often reminded, frequent lapses into sin, and grievous departure from God; and, in like manner, every church has had to mourn over backslidings and over cases of foul sin in its adult-membership. The *validity* of baptism is not of consequence affected: In no church is there any requirement for the *re-baptism of restored members*.

The testimony of Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, as quoted by Foster, is very much to the purpose. The great Baptist preacher is not only open communion, but he comes as near as possible to infant church-membership: "I have" he says, during the past year received forty or fifty children into church membership. Among those I have had at any time to exclude from church fellowship out of a church of twenty-seven hundred members, I have never had to exclude one who was received while yet a child."

Children are addressed in the Epistle to the Ephesians as in the church. They are in the church as an institute for making and moulding christian life. They are to be trained up *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*.

In the best days of the church there shall be the accomplishment of inspired prediction : " All thy children shall be taught of the Lord."

" For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord ; I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts : and I will be unto them a God, and they shall be unto me a people : and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord ; *for all shall know me from the least to the greatest.*"

#### CONCLUSION.

It is not too much to *assume* that *objections* to infant baptism which have, at different times, been most plausibly presented and most persistently pressed, have been thoroughly investigated. In the " balances of the sanctuary " they are only as the " small dust." There is however, " a more excellent way," enforced in the wise and weighty words of the venerable Dr. Osborne, of the British Methodist Conference—which may fitly close this chapter. He cordially commends the example of the saintly and learned Philip Henry—father of the well known commentator. " He had a method of improving infant baptism, superior to that of most divines, and decidedly better than I have at any time met with. He drew out what he called the form of the Baptismal Covenant : " I take God the Father to be my Father ; I take God the Son to be my Saviour ; I take God the Holy Ghost to be my Comforter, Teacher, Guide and Sanctifier ; I take the word of God to be the rule of my actions ; I take the people of God to be my people in all conditions : and all this I do deliberately, freely and forever." He taught all his children to say this to him every Satur-

day night. When they were able to write, he made every one of them write it and sign it. "Now," he said, "I will keep this for a testimony against you." And he did keep it. And there is found amongst his papers one of the most affecting documents in the English language—a copy of this Covenant *signed* by each of his children in succession. But he never had to produce it against them. By God's grace they kept it; and they verified his own frequent adage, Fast bind, fast find."

"That our sons," pleads the psalmist, "may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner stones polished after the similitude of a palace:"—as the polished and beautiful stones prepared for the magnificent sanctuary.

"And *infants*, though part  
Of the true archetypal house of God,  
Built on the heavenly Zion, are not now,  
Nor will be ever, massive rocks rough hewn,  
Or ponderous corner-stones, or fluted shafts  
Of columns, or over shadowing pinacles.  
But rather as the delicate lily-work  
By Hiram wrought for Solomon of old,  
Enwreathed upon the brazen chapiters,  
Or flowers of lilies round the molten sea.  
Innumerable flowers thus bloom and blush  
In Heaven."

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### TESTIMONY OF ANTIQUITY.

"*Till he can read Sanctii Minerva, with Scoppius and Perizzonius' notes.*"—Locke.

"When two authorities are up,  
Neither of them supreme, how soon confusion  
May enter twixt the gap."—Shakespeare.

"*Hast thou appealed unto Cæsar? Unto Cæsar thou shalt go.*"—*Festus.*

There is a suggestive legend of the old Greeks, which though mythical in regard to fact, expresses and crystalizes an essential truth. Ariadne,\* the queenly daughter of Minos, had a clue, a famous little thread which had been given to her by Vulcan. In love with the "Godlike Theseus," she gave him the clue; and, by its assistance, he safely traversed the dark and dangerous labyrinth of Minotaur. The ancient story has not yet lost its significance.

We are leaving the safe and sure light of heavenly wisdom and of authoritative scriptural teaching; we are plunging into the intricacies, discrepancies and fallibilities of classic, historic, and other human authorities.. We shall need some safe and sure guiding clue--such as that by which, in the misty morning of Mythology and shadowy Greek legend, the renowned Athenian hero was enabled securely to traverse the famous Cretan Cave..

The fundamental principle, the

#### ARIADNE CLUE,

which we need to grasp firmly: the *supremacy* of inspired teaching—an ultimate and absolute standard of

\*The Greek legend of the Ariadne thread had been already appropriated, for this passage, when it was incidentally discovered that, in a popular lecture on Biology, the same classic clue had been used to represent *axiomatic* truth.

The authorities chiefly cited in these pages are mostly indicated. Distance from any important and comprehensive collection of Standard works has been felt at some points, to be a serious inconvenience; and has necessitated occasional quotation from other than original sources. In no case, however, has any citation been made except from reliable and responsible writers. To several friends, and especially to the esteemed Rector of Charlottetown, the Rev. D. Fitzgerald, I have been indebted for valuable books of reference.

appeal—will enable us to thread our way through the intricacy and entanglement of complicated, conflicting human testimonies and authorities.

"O how unlike the works of man  
Heaven's easy artless unencumbered plan.  
No Metricions graces to beguile,  
No clustering ornaments to clog the pile.  
From ostentation as from weakness free  
It stands like the cerulean arch we see,  
Majestic in its simplicity."—*Cowper*.

## I. CLASSIC USAGE.

Elaborate and exhaustive investigation, by competent scholars, has shewn that the essential idea of the verb *baptizo* is not *mode*, but condition, no matter by what means effected.—*changed condition*.

When Alexander marched his army at the foot of Mount Climax, in Lycia, the sea having covered the path: "the troops," says Strabo, "were in the waters a whole day, baptized (baptizomenon) up to the middle,"—wading up to the waist a whole day, the soldiers were baptized but not immersed.—Strabo, Lib. 14, 982 p.

Plutarch cites the Sybilline verse, a prediction of Athenian fortunes, "*askos baptize dunai de toi ou themis esti*," "as a bladder thou may'st be baptized, but thou art not destined to sink." The city would be subjected to disaster, but like the bladder floating lightly upon the surface of the waters, would surmount them all,—baptized but not sunk: no immersion.—Dr. Halley, 352 p.

Describing the slaughter of Cleobulus, in his sixteenth book of the *Iliad* Homer tells that Ajax "struck him in the neck with his hilted sword, and the whole sword was warmed with blood." A Greek commentator on Homer, Dionysius, remarks on the clause: "In this he expresses greater emphasis, as the sword being so



baptized (*baptisthentos*) as even to be warmed." The hilted sword of the mighty Ajax was baptized in blood flowing from a wound in the neck of his falling foe: that was baptism, but no immersion.—Vit. Hom., 297 p.

A youth, in the company of Sophists, was bewildered with the subtle questions, and that is said to be a baptism: *Ego gnous baptizemenon to meirakion*—"I knowing the youth baptized."—Enthd. 277, D. There was baptism by questioning, but no immersion.

In a battle description, *Dioderus Siculus* says of troops, that had been defeated and driven into the river, "the river flowing down with a more violent current, baptized many, (*pollons ebaptize*) and destroyed them swimming across in their armour." A threefold action is described: 1.—The defeated troops were "driven into the river"—immersion but not baptism. 2.—The action of the waves upon the men in their armour—"many baptized"—a baptism. 3.—"And destroyed them;" they sank in their armour; but that utter destruction was not their baptism.—Diod. Sic. 2, 142.

Josephus in his Jewish wars, describing the action of waves upon certain vessels, says: "The billow high raised baptized them—*ebaptize*." Clearly the mode suggested is that of the element acting upon the ships.—Jewish Wars, 3, 8, 3.

For an exhaustive treatment of the whole question of baptism, where matters of scholarship and research are concerned, I must refer to the noble volumes of Dr. James Dale, a learned Presbyterian Minister.\* In each book *Judaic, Johannic, Christic and Patristic*, but especially in

\* Dr. Dale in student life sat at the feet of Prof. Moses Stewart, and now wears the mantle of that illustrious scholar.

## CLASSIC BAPTISM.

the intelligent student will obtain all the aid that can be required for examination of the whole subject.

I have noticed that a reviewer of "Baptisma" speaks of the volumes of Dr. Dale, confessedly, whatever else they may not be, monuments of massive and accurate scholarship, and of stupendous research, as an "amusing work, and the author as "a certain man in the United States."\* Dr. Dale has traversed the whole domain. In vindication and verification of authorities and citations, he explored European libraries. Scores of the most learned men of the time, including Biblical critics, Theological Professors, Presidents of Colleges, have staked the reputation upon the assertion that Dr. Dale has made good his position. "On which side is the weight of opinion?"

To attempt to deal in detail with the *puny* criticism of the "review," or to meet the charge of "gross manipulation" would be grievous sacrifice of space and waste of words. The chapter of criticism on Dr. Dale's noble and comprehensive work, apart from its few quotations, reminds one only of Robert Hall's daring metaphor: *a mouse nibbling at the wing of a flaming archangel.*

The author of "review" whose complete work I have just seen, has selected a remarkable caption for a book of such pretensions. A compound of Anglicised and classical form and termination, such as that of the title-page, constitutes a rare phenomenon in the literary world. For a man who could not write his own title-page correctly to undertake the criticism of Dr. Dale's

\* "Bible Baptisma, by D. G. McDonald, Pastor of the Baptist Church, Charlottetown."

erudite volumes, is, in his own phrase, to say the least, "very amusing."

That title-page announces "Bible Baptisma" "and its qualifications. Does the Bible, for the defence of his system, demand *qualification* ? Alas, for the system !

An exhaustive selection from *Dr. Dale's* CLASSIC BAPTISM would of itself demand a volume. The utmost that can be attempted is to indicate the scientific and satisfying nature of the treatment and the clearness and decisiveness of result. The inquiry extends to all passages in classic authors in which the word is known to occur. *One hundred and twelve passages*, according to their character, are distributed into classes and subjected to searching analysis :

1. A list of *twelve* examples : these include Aristotle's baptism of the sea-coast, Plutarch's baptism of the bladder and Strabo's baptism to the waist.

2. A class of examples, page 254, in which a certain influence of *baptizo*, as in the destruction of vessels, finds illustration—"the ship nearly baptized," *baptizetai*,—"baptized, *baptis then*tes, by their own weight"—"and breathed as one out of a state of baptism," *bebaptisthai*,—"and ships anchored were baptized," *baptisthenai*,—"carrying down many baptized, *ebaptize*, and destroyed them." In the destructions of vessels, described in many of these passages, the mode is to *sink* : For centuries they have been beneath the whelming wave ; but surely the *sinking* of ships as a mode cannot meet the demands of immersion as a rite. There was in all these cases an influence, or *effect*, of the action, which determined the classical use of the word.

3. A classification of twenty-four passages, page

266, in which instrumentality is indicated: "I baptizing you by the sea-waves"—baptizing with his hands the fleet of the Persians—"baptizing his hand into the blood, &c."

4. A selection of thirty examples, page 283, intended to exemplify the secondary meaning of baptizo. Dr. Dale contends conclusively that words of this class, in their secondary sense "secure well defined meaning, through continued use, and great breadth of application, lose wholly their figurative character and must be considered simple and literal in their expression." Amongst illustrative examples we find: "what is sudden, astounds the soul, *falling* on it unawares, and thoroughly baptizes it"—"baptized with calamity"—"when midnight had baptized the city with sleep"—"they do not baptize the people by taxes"—"for there fighting he baptized all Asia"—"baptized by the affairs of life"—"baptized by grief." "Rhyme and reason" says Dr. Dale, "carry licence often into licentiousness; but I do not remember that either has ever taken the liberty of putting a city to sleep, *figuratively*, by plunging it *into water*. The communication of the gentle influence of sleep, when represented by figure proceeds on a wholly different basis." According to Ovid, the Latin Poet, humid night gathers from the dwelling of the God Somnus the soporifics of rich poppies, and countless herbs, and *sprinkles* them over the darkened earth. Heliodorus *baptized the city with sleep*; but does not specify *mode*: Ovid explains that the somnolent *condition* is produced by sprinkling.

5. A list of fifteen examples, page 317, which includes Plato's youth baptized with bewildering questions—baptism by unmixed wine—Alexander baptized by much wine—baptism by an opiate drug—baptized by

drunkenness into insensibility and sleep, &c. The idea of immersion in wine is certainly absurd, and not for a moment to be entertained. Drunkenness is produced by a reception of the element, and not by an *immersion* into it.

As the result of this thorough inquiry it has been shewn:

1. That *Baptizo* in classic usage demands for its **OBJECT condition**—condition characterized by *completeness*. “Whenever any liquid possessed of a quality capable of *exerting* a controlling influence of any kind whatever is applied to an object, so as to develop influence it is said on all classical authority to baptize the object, without regard to mode of application and with as little regard to physical position.”

2. To meet the demand for a completely *changed* condition it accepts any *agency*, physical or spiritual, competent to the task: “hot iron made to pass *into* a *cold condition*; intoxicating wine made to pass *into* an un-intoxicating condition; a defiled man made to pass *into* a *purified* condition; a sober man made to pass *into* a drunken condition; a wakeful man made to pass *into* a deeply somnolent condition;” and other changed conditions exemplify the dominant idea of classic baptism.

3. That *Baptizo* is a many-sided word adjusting itself to the most diverse cases: Agamemnon was baptized, Bacchas was baptized, Panthia was baptized, and a host of others were baptized; each one differently from the others in the *nature* or *mode* of the baptism, or both. It would be easier to thread the Cretan Cave, without a clue, than to determine the nature or mode of any given baptism, of the classic record, morely from the meaning of the word *baptizo*.

Baptisms were variously effected; and classic Greek pronounces a man, who is in a condition of drunkenness, to be a baptized man—in a condition of obloquy to be a baptized man—in a condition of grief to be a baptized man—in a condition of mental perplexity to be a baptized man—"then I say any one who chooses to apply the term to a man restored by any competent influence to a condition of religious *purity*, will have the unanimous support of every classic Greek writer through a thousand years."

4. In the exhaustive inquiry of Dr. Dale we obtain an answer to the question: What is Classic Baptism?

"Whatever is capable of thoroughly changing the character, state, or condition of any object, is capable of baptizing that object; and by such change of character, state or condition does in fact baptize it."

Accordingly classic baptisms were effected by a draft of wine, by an opiate drug, by a heavy sleep, by a bewildering question: "Accumulate, around these baptisms, metaphor, figure, picture, and what not. I make my argument with finger pointed to the cup, the question, the opiate drop and say: *the old Greeks baptized through a thousand years with such things as these.*"

5. The *distinctive idea* of the Greek verb *baptizo*: changed *condition*, produced by any competent agency, permissible by any possible mode, that which—in contradistinction to *cheo*, to *pour*: *rhantizo*, to *sprinkle*: *dupto*, to *dip*: *buthizo*, to *immerse*: *kataduo*, to *go under*, and words of merely modal action—has always clung to its use, gathering strength and significance with varied breadth of application, proves that the selection of this word, by the inspired writers, was not the result of accidental and

arbitrary arrangement; and that it was dictated and determined by governing philological principle.

6. We must bear in mind that *classic* usage throughout this discussion, is a very different thing and demands different treatment, from the same word applied to the christian sacrament.

The author of *Classic Baptism* "claims, and nothing more, to have followed the golden thread of truth, slowly, steadily, simply, absolutely, through intricacy, winding and bewilderment, until brought into a broad place. Those who examine and believe they see the golden filament stretching, unbroken, unwrested all along the way, will approve and accept." The controlling idea of all these passages, and that doubtless which determined the exclusive selection of the Greek verb *baptizo* for the christian sacrament, carries us far beyond the insignificance of mere mode, constitutes the "golden filament" of clear and intelligible *principle*.

In possession of this

#### ARIADNE THREAD

we are enabled through the windings of a *thousand* years, and all the varied applications of the word in disputation, to traverse the deep labyrinth of classic Literature.

#### II. GREEK LEXICONS AND GREEK AUTHORS.

The opinion has been repeatedly expressed: that, inasmuch as nearly all words of distinguished importance, in the Greek of the New Testament, are used in a new sense and applied to subjects of which ancient authors had no knowledge, the New Testament meaning of Baptize and Baptism must be sought in inspired teaching. This law of investigation must ever form *the*

golden gateway through which we pass into sun-lit temple of truth. We prefer in this inquiry to consult the oracles of God; but if others appeal to Cæsar, then to Cæsar they must go.

The following extract from an important work by Rev. W. Thorn, an English writer, published some years ago, exhibits in compact and compendious form the result of learned and laborious research. It does not sufficiently *discriminate* between the verbs *bapto* and *baptizo*—a matter of moment in this inquiry—but for a comprehensive view of this part of the field it is somewhat valuable.

## GREEK LEXICONS.

“That the word baptize has a variety of significations, and is of a generic nature, may be made by an appeal to the best Lexicographers. The following have been consulted: Hedricus, Leigh, Parkhurst, Schleusner, Scapula, Stephens and Suidas. Reference has also been made to Montanus', 'Literal version' of the Apocrypha and New Testament, and to the Hebrew terms, rendered baptize by the seventy translators. The result of the research is, that the word is deemed synonymous, with the following Latin verbs:—

<i>Abluo</i>	To wash away	<i>Madefacio</i>	To wet
<i>Colo</i>	To colour	<i>Maculo</i>	To pollute
<i>Demergo</i>	To dive	<i>Mergo</i>	To dip
<i>Duco</i>	To lead	<i>Mundo</i>	To cleanse
<i>Figo</i>	To pierce	<i>Obruo</i>	To overwhelm
<i>Fuco</i>	To colour	<i>Pereo</i>	To perish
<i>Haurio</i>	To draw up	<i>Purgo</i>	To purge
<i>Imbuo</i>	To imbue	<i>Rubesco</i>	To redden
<i>Immergo</i>	To plunge	<i>Submergo</i>	To put under
<i>Impleo</i>	To fill	<i>Terreo</i>	To affright
<i>Intingo</i>	To die	<i>Tingo</i>	To stain
<i>Lavo</i>	To wash		



## GREEK AUTHORS.

"We proceed now to the translations of our opponents. Considerable pains have been taken by them to enlist the GREEK AUTHORS under their banners for the purpose of aiding their cause. Five only of their most eminent and learned divines—Booth, Cox, Gale, Ryland and Gibbs—have cited numerous passages from Greek writers, to establish their position, that baptize means only to dip or plunge, and that they do not remember a passage where all other senses are not necessarily excluded.' That these gentlemen have not perverted the sense of their authorities to the prejudice of their cause, may be readily supposed—and what is the result? That the word baptize, as employed by the ancient Greek poets, philosophers, historians and divines, signifies only one and the same definite action, and that to dip, plunge or immerse?—Far from it.—The following list of translations, presents the fruit of their laborious researches and philosophical acumen. According to them it is used for

Bathe	Dyed	Over head and ears	Sprinkled
Besmear	Fill	Plunged	Stained
Caused	Given up to	Pour	Steep
Coloured	Infected	Purify	Sink
Covered	Imbue	Put	Swallowed up
Crushed	Immersed	Put into	Thrust
Daubed	Involved	Quenched	Tinged
Dip	Laid under	Redden	Washed
Drawing water	Let down	Run through	Wetted
Drank much	Oppressed	Smeared	
Drowned	Overwhelmed	Soaked	

"By cursory reference to the citations, our opponents have made from Greek writings, for the express purpose of supporting their exclusive mode of baptism, we find the following operations, conditions, or designs, are designated by the word baptize or baptism."

Staining a sword with blood or slaughter.  
 Daubing the face with paint.  
 Colouring the cheeks by intoxication.  
 Dyeing a lake with the blood of a frog.  
 Beating a person till red with his own blood.  
 Staining the hand by squeezing a substance.  
 Ornamenting clothes with a paint, needle or brush.  
 Imbuing a person with his own thoughts, or justice.  
 Polluting the mind by fornication and sophistry.  
 Poisoning the heart with evil manners.  
 Involving a person in debt and difficulties.  
 Bringing ruin on a city by besieging it.  
 The natural tints of a bird or flower.  
 Plunging a sword into a viper or army.  
 Running a man through with a spear.  
 Sticking the feet of a flea in melted wax.  
 Quenching a flaming torch in water.  
 Seasoning hot iron by dipping it in cold water.  
 Plying the oars and rowing a vessel.  
 Dipping children into a cold bath.  
 Drowning persons in a lake, pond or sea.  
 Sinking a ship crew and persons under water.  
 Sweetening hay with honey.  
 Soaking a herring in brine.  
 Steeping a stone in wine.  
 Immersing ones'self up to the middle, breast or head.  
 Destroying ships in a harbour by storm.  
 Filling a cup with honey.  
 Drawing water in a pitcher or bucket.  
 Popping cupid into a cup of wine.  
 Poisoning arrows, and presents like arrows.  
 Washing wool in or with water.  
 Cleansing the body wholly or partially.  
 Tinging the finger with blood.  
 Dipping birds or their bills in a river.  
 A dolphin ducking an ape.  
 The tide overflowing the land.  
 Pouring water on wood and garden plants.  
 Dyeing an article in a vat.  
 Throwing fish into cold water.  
 Dipping weapons of war in blood.  
 Overwhelming a ship with stones.  
 Oppressing or burdening the poor with taxes.  
 Overcome with sleep or calamity.  
 Destroying animals with a land flood.

"Little comment is requisite on these allusions. It is clear as the light at noon, that the passages which

our opponents have selected from Greek authors, as the best calculated to sustain their cause of exclusive dipping, have completely failed. But there are other passages in Greek writers, which our brethren have purposely or inadvertently overlooked—and where, in several instances, the sense of the word in question is, if possible, still more adverse to their conclusions.”

*Aristophanes*.—‘Magnes, an old comic of Athens, used the Lydian music. shaved his face, and baptized it with tawny colours.’ He applied the colours to his face. —‘Dress not with costly clothes, which are baptized with the richest colours.’ Several colours must be applied to the cloth.

*Aristotle*.—‘If it is pressed, it baptizes the hand which sustains and presses it.’ Here the hand is tinged by an application of the colouring matter to it.

*Dion Cassius*.—‘Those from above baptizing the ships with stones and engines.’ Here the baptizing materials came from above, down upon the vessels.

*Homer*.—‘He, the frog breathless fell, and the lake was baptized with blood.’ The blood was applied to the water, and not the water dipped into the blood.

*Aelian*.—‘Having baptized with precious ointment, a garland woven of roses.’ The garland was surely not dipped into a box of ointment, but the ointment was poured or sprinkled on the garland.

*Athenaus*.—‘I have been baptized with wine.’ Not bathing in it, but intoxicated—the wine was applied to him, for he drank it.

*Bentley’s Epigrams*.—‘You baptize your head, but you shall never baptize old age.’ You adorn your head with gay attire. Here the baptizing material is applied

to the head.—‘Who first baptized the muse with viperish gall.’ Who first tinged or imbued the mind, by applying the element to it?

*Iamblichus*.—‘Baptize not in the periranterion.’ This was a small vessel like those kept at the doors of all Roman Catholic Chapels—the act here is evidently sprinkling.

*Julius Pollux*.—‘The girl observing the mouth of the dog, (which had eaten the murex,) stained with an unusual baptism.’ The murex is a small shell-fish. The mouth of the dog was baptized by an application of the colour to it.

*Justin*.—‘Sprinkling with holy water was invented by demons, an imitation of the true baptism, signified by the prophets, (Is. lii: 15; Ezek xxxvi: 25,) that their votaries might have their pretended purifications by water.’ Here sprinkling and baptism are used synonymously.

*Potter's Antiq.*—‘The priests of Cotys were called Baptists, from staining their bodies with certain colours. Here also, the colouring element is applied to the body.

“These passages are sufficient as specimens of a great many more. The deduction from this branch of investigation is simple and easy:—That the word generally, if not exclusively, expresses an EFFECT produced, rather than any precise mode of accomplishing it.”

### III. BAPTO.

*Bapto* is never in any of its forms, in the New Testament, applied to Baptism as an ordinance of the Christian Church. *Baptizo* is always used; the verb *bapto* never; and therefore the discussion to which it has given rise, has no value—except that which is in-

ferential and illustrative. Two or three examples, of the use of this verb, without attaching importance to them, may be given.

In the *Battle of the Frogs*, a mock heroic poem, sometimes ascribed to Homer, one of the champions called Crambophagus was mortally wounded: "He fell and the lake (*epabteto*) was tinged with blood." Was that baptism, the lake in the blood of a frog, an immersion? In the Book of Daniel, iv, 33, we read of the judgment of Nebuchadnezzar: "and his body was wet with the dew of heaven." The Septuagint has *ebaphe* for wet—*was baptized*. The question is one of *mode* not of quantity. Was there an immersion? Was the insane King *plunged* into dew or did the dew *descend*? There is one passage in the New Testament in which the verb *bapto* occurs, which calls for special attention: "and he was clothed with vesture dipped (*bebammenon*) in blood." Rev. xix, 13. There is no question but the verb was used in its secondary sense, and that the literal rendering would be; "vesture *stained* in blood." But what of *mode*? The passage is one of the few *which admits of positive proof*. In the parallel passage of Isaiah, the conqueror coming "from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah" speaking in righteousness, mighty to save, declares of His foes: "their blood shall be *sprinkled* upon my garments, and I will *stain* all my raiment." According to Grove, the Greek lexicographer, *bapto* signifies, "to dip, plunge, immerse; to wash; to wet, moisten, sprinkle; to steep, imbue; to dye, stain, color. The use of *bapto*, in the secondary sense of *to stain*, is accounted for; and the mode is expressly said to be *sprinkled*."

It is freely conceded that *Bapto* is used some times in the sense of *to dip*. The more numerous the examples

of such use which by possibility can be accumulated, and the more apparent and cogent becomes the discrimination of which the sacred writers have given evidence. In no solitary case, in any form has *Bapto* been applied to the ordinance of baptism.

Sixteen times in the Septuagint it is used as the rendering of the Hebrew word *Taval*. In the English Bible we have, as the rendering of the Hebrew and in correspondence with the Septuagint, the Saxon dip; but in some cases the only admissible action is that of moistening and wetting. The living bird, according to the rendering of Leviticus, cedar wood, scarlet wool and bunch of hyssop were all to be *dipped* in the blood of another bird, of the same size as the first.

Having given the meaning of *bapto*, according to the Greek lexicographer Grove, it may be desirable to close this notice with the definition of *Taval*, by the eminent Hebrew Lexicographer, Fürst: "To *moisten*, to *sprinkle*, to dip to immerse in anything fluid with accusative of the object." To bathe, Deut. xxxiii: 24." The *fundamental* signification of the stem is to moisten, to besprinkle."

#### IV. HELLENISTIC GREEK.

The language of the New Testament is the later Greek language, as spoken by foreigners of the Hebrew stock. The literature to which appeal can be most legitimately made for the interpretation of the New Testament Greek, the version of the Seventy and the Apocrypha, exhibits suggestive illustration of *baptizo*.

1. SEPTUAGINT: The only example of the verb with a literal meaning, is in the account of the miraculous cure of Naaman's leprosy: "And Naaman went

down.—*Kai ebaptisato en to Jordane*—and baptized in, or at, the Jordan, seven times, according to the saying of Elisha.” The authorized version is, that Naaman went down and *dipped himself*. He was commanded by the prophet to *wash* seven times. The verb *to wash*, (*bathe*) has been appealed to in the discussion. The following quotation, from Dr. Smith’s Dictionary of Antiquities, may be carried along with us in this and other passages of the Septuagint, in which *washings* and *bathings* are commanded: “In ancient vases, in which persons are represented bathing, we never find anything corresponding to a modern bath, in which persons can stand or sit; but there is always a round or oval basin, (*louter or louterion*) resting in a stand, by the side of which those who are bathing are *represented standing undressed* and washing themselves.” The discourse of Naaman was *local*. “I thought,” he wrathfully exclaimed, “that he would strike his hand over the place.” But instead of striking with his hand, the Prophet in harmony with Divine requirement for purification of leprosy, the sprinkling of water, and in accordance with Oriental idea and usage, prescribed the application of water to the place. Seven times, as in the version of the seventy, the Syrian General baptized himself and as the result there was a completely changed condition.

In one other passage only does *baptizo* occur in the Septuagint. Instead of the rendering of the authorized version, in Isaiah xxiv; iv, “fearfulness hath affrighted me” the Greek of the seventy has *he anomia me baptizei*; “Iniquity baptizes me.” The use is figurative and extended discussion unnecessary. One such passage abundantly refutes the erroneous assertion that the verb

means "to dip and only to dip, through all Greek literature."

2. APOCRYPHA: Two passages only afford example and illustration of the use of the verb *baptizo* in the apocryphal books. And she went out every night to the valley of Bethulia and *baptized herself* (*ebaptizeto*) in the camp at the fountain of water. Judith xii. 7. "The unseemliness of a lady," says Prof. Wilson, "submitting to nightly immersion, in the midst of a camp, and at the fountain from which, it is considered probable, an army derived its supply of water, has staggered most interpreters and tested the nerve of the majority of Controversialists." The "wisdom of Sirach" asks "when one is"—*baptiz omenos aponekrou*—baptized from a dead body, and touches it again of what avail is his washing?" The *sprinkling* of the unclean, which, according to inspired teaching sanctified, was understood in the "wisdom of Sirach" to be a baptism.

#### V. BATHINGS AND WASHINGS.

In the personal acts of bathing and washing, which, in addition to the official *sprinkling* of the unclean, *sanctified* and saved, were required in the Jewish laws of purification, of which we have a full account in the Book of Leviticus, the Hebrew word used is *Rahats*, which means simply to wash. It is translated chiefly by *lavo* and *nipto* in the Septuagint, by *lavo* in the Latin, and by *bathe* and *wash* in the authorized version.

The various purifications of the Old Testament designated, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "different baptisms," have been described in the early part of the chapter *mode of Baptism*,—Page 32. In addition to official administration, there were, as we have seen,



private and *personal* ablutions. This part of the subject is of very subordinate importance, but it is necessary that it should be placed in clear and satisfactory light.

"We prepare the way," with Dr. Whedon, "by one sweeping affirmation, that the Hebrew word for *immerse* is not once used in the commands which impose the modes of these various baptisms. The English words are *sprinkle*, *wash*, *bathe*, neither of which imposed the specific mode, immersion. The word *bathe* simply signifies to wash. Even *with the bad rendering, bathe*, a false idea will not be received by those who are aware that in the East bathing is performed, *not* by immersion, but by affusion."

"*No immersions of persons*," says Dr. Beecher on *Baptizo*, in *Biblical Repository*, "are enjoined under the Mosaic ritual." As this fact does not appear to have been noticed as it ought, and as many assume the contrary, it is necessary to furnish proof of this assertion.

"It lies in this fact, that no washings of persons, even in a single instance, enjoined by any word that denotes immersion; but, as I think, without exception, by the word *rahats* which denotes to wash or purify—without any reference to the mode."

"Those who read the English version might suppose that where the direction to *bathe* occurs, immersion is enjoined; but in every such case the original word denotes only to *wash*. If any doubt whether this be the true view of the import of *rahats*, let him take a Hebrew concordance, and trace it through the whole of the Old Testament, and he will have abundant proof."

"In all this process" speaking of ancient purification by the application of water to an unclean person,

"*immersion* is not once enjoined. The Greek *louo* and the Hebrew *rahats* do not imply *bathing* or immersion; because *bathing* denotes a specific mode of cleansing, whereas *rahats* and *louo* are not specific."

"If it be still urged," says Dr. Hibbard, *Christian Baptism*, page 66, "that *baptize* refers to the outward mode of using water: to which of the modes in the original command, Numbers 19: 11—19, does it answer in signification? Does it answer to *perirrhaino*, to *sprinkle around upon*, or, to *louo*—answering to the Hebrew *rahats*, *wash*? These are all the words that are used, in the original command, to describe the outward act or mode of using water. To which of these original words does *baptizo* refer? Which of the two positions will our opponents adopt? Are they not fairly grounded? and will not their theory *overwhelm* them in difficulties if they do not speedily abandon it?"

"It is contended," in reference to "review" of Professor Stuart, "that where the law requires the Jews to *wash*—Hebrew *rahats* and Greek *louo*—they understood it to mean *immerse*. To sanction this construction he cites Talmuds and *Maimonides*; and he might as well have appealed to *Zoroaster* and *Zendavesta*. Why did he not appeal to the Old Testament? This would have settled the question at once." The question is not, how did the Talmudical writers understand *rahats*? but, how did the Holy Spirit employ the word in the Old Testament Scriptures?

In the thirtieth chapter of Exodus will be found a description of the brasen laver: "Thou shalt make also a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass to wash withal: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the con-

gregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. For Aaron and his sons shall wash their feet thereat."

The nineteenth verse reads, in the Septuagint:

"And Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet *with water from it.*" *Kai nipsetai Aaron kai hoi whioi auton ek auton tas cheiras, kai tous podas hudati.*

The brazen laver, *loutéra chalkoun*, elevated upon a pedestal of brass would have been a most inconvenient arrangement for bathing the feet, in the mode of dipping them. The sense of the Septuagint, held to be in strict accordance with the original Hebrew, is most explicit: *ek auton—out of it.* The act prescribed was to be performed with water drawn from that laver.\*

"It is remarkable," says Thorne, "that the laws of purification were given to the Hebrews, in a wilderness, where there was comparatively no water; and yet what Moses enjoined was never objected to as impossible, through scarcity of water." For forty years, in that waste howling wilderness, washing by immersion, *daily*, great multitudes of people in water, must have been utterly impracticable.

#### VI. PATRISTIC TESTIMONY.

The testimony of the *fathers*, in regard to doctrine and rite of the christian church, comes to us in strangely conflicting forms. "I see plainly," says Chillingworth, an eminent Protestant writer of the 17th century, "that there are Popes against Popes, Councils against Councils, some Fathers against others, the *same Fathers against themselves.*" The conflict and confusion of which the

\* Prof. Wilson, p. 169.

learned Chillingworth became so painfully conscious, in his patristic researches, led to his noble *axiomatic* utterance:—by which Protestantism ought ever to abide: “*The Bible, the Bible alone, is our religion.*”

The sole purpose for which patristic testimony is introduced, in common with other voices of antiquity, to which appeal has been made, is for the light which it throws upon the meaning of the word, chiefly in dispute. These Greeks were at home in the language, to which *baptizo* belongs; and their testimony ought to be accepted as valid evidence.

Clemens of Alexandria was one of the most learned writers of the *early* part of the *third* century. The great purpose of his teaching, developed in his *stromata*, was to show that the best elements of Christianity had been already in existence in heathen institutions. Penelope “in waters washed” and Telemachus, “having *washed his hands* in the hoary sea,” *cheiras nipsamenos poliès halos &c.*—Odys. II, 261, presented to the mind of Clemens an image of christian baptism: “handed down from Moses to the poets.” Clemens also mentions the customs of the Jews, “often *baptized on their couch,*” —which could not mean immersion.

Origen, who became Catechist of Alexandria at the commencement of the third century, was one of the most learned of the ante-Nicene Fathers. Most of the fathers were satisfied with the Septuagint, or with *Latin translations* of the Old Testament, but Origen of Alexandria drank from the pure unsealed fountains of original truth. In reference to the interrogation of John the Baptist: why baptizest thou then? Origen, as quoted by Dr. Wall, has the comment: “what makes you think

that Elias when he comes will baptize, who—in Ahabs time—did not baptize, *baptizantos*, the *wood* upon the altar, which required washing in order to be burnt up when the Lord should reveal himself by fire ?”

“ We here,” says Prof. Wilson, “ come into contact with the most learned Greek Father, and one of the most accomplished Biblical scholars of the ancient church. Origen knew that Elijah commanded his attendants to *pour water on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood*. The author of the Hexapla had carefully studied his Bible and entered profoundly and minutely into peculiarities of thought and forms of expression. How invaluable the testimony, when a writer, of such undoubted attainments, identifies the command to *pour water upon the wood* with a command to baptize.”—*Infant Bap.* p. 370.

Cyril of Alexandria, in allusion to ancient purifications, says : “ We have been *baptized*, not with mere water, nor yet with *the ashes of a heifer*, but with the Holy Spirit and fire.” Strange baptism : that of *ashes* ! Compared with the well-known passage in Hebrews—“ The ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctified to the purifying of the flesh”—it is perfectly explicable.\*

\* As this chapter passes through the press, at the last moment, I have obtained a glance at a “Review of Baptisma” in which the author complains of *torture* of Cyril’s passage. There was scarcely more than an allusion to Cyril’s testimony, and therefore hardly room for the perpetration of such injustice. From the work of Conant, to which “review” is chiefly indebted for what is most valuable in its pages, the reviewer quotes the Greek text of Cyril. The vigorous and scholarly President Beecher in the “Biblical Repository, critically expounds the passage ; and if the charge of “unpardonable torture” had been applied as *originally* intended to the masterly criticism of Dr. Beecher there might have been, whether *sound* or otherwise, some sense in it.

"Wonder not," said Chrysostom of the golden mouth, "that I call martyrdom a *baptism*, for there also *the spirit descends in rich abundance*."—Hom. The language of the eloquent Greek preacher is in pure and perfect accordance with the inspired account of Pentecostal baptism.

"These two baptisms he shed forth from the wound of his pierced side:" *Hos duo baptismos de vulnere perfossi lateris emisit*.—*Tertullian* p. 537, Paris.

"Baptized a second time with tears:" *kai tois dakrusi baptizomenos ek deuteron*.—*Clem. Alex.* II, 649.

Thou seest the power of baptism, *baptismatos* \* \* \* He will sprinkle upon you clean water: *Rhantiei ep humas hutor katharon*.—*Cyril of Jerusalem*.

"And the very image of baptism, *baptismatos*, both continually illuminated and saved all Israel at that time. as Paul wrote, and as prophesied Ezekiel, 36: 25, I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and David Ps. 50: 9, sprinkle me with hyssop."—*Didymus Alex.* 713.

"I know a fourth kind of baptism, that which is by martyrdom and blood, with which Christ himself was baptized; and I know a fifth, *the baptism of tears*."—*Gregory Naz.* 353.

"John was baptized, *ebaptisthé*, by putting his hand upon the divine head of his Master and by his own blood."—*John of Damascus*.

"A passage like this," says Dr. Dale, "as with the strong arms of Manoah's son takes hold of the pillars of immersion, and shakes them into hopeless ruin."

These citations from the Fathers are not made, because of their doctrinal value, or because they exhibit

continuous and consistent patristic view; but because they shew the sense in which the early christian writers understood the Greek verb *baptizo*, and as evidence that the ancient teachers, when adhering to scriptural phraseology, notwithstanding the introduction of baptismal error, represented *effusion* as the ideal of mode and action in the administration of baptism.

The student of this subject can, in "Christic and Patristic Baptism,"\* pursue the inquiry. One more testimony must close this section. It comes to us from *Justin Martyr*. He was born at the close of the first century, and therefore testifies of Apostolic usage:

"Sprinkling with holy water was invented by *demons*, in imitation of true baptism, signified by the prophets (Is. 52: 15; Ezek. 36: 25), that their votaries might have their pretended purifications by water:"

1. The lustrations of Greek and Roman worship were believed by Justin to be borrowed from Hebrew purifications: "in imitation of the true baptism signified by the prophets;" and he had considerable warrant for the belief. In the Hebrew scriptures he read of divine requirement: "And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, &c."—Numb. 19: 18. How the lustration was performed by the Romans we learn from the Mantuan Bard:

"A verdant branch of olive in his hand,  
He moved around and purified the band;  
Slow as he passed the lustral waters shed,  
Then closed the rites &c."—*Pitt's Virgil*, 229.

2. Ancient applications of water, in religious

\* Dr. Dale.

ceremony, were all by affusion. A small vessel, called the *peranterion*, for "sprinkling with holy water," of which Justin Martyr speaks, was kept at the entrance of their temples. Triple aspersion was administered—which was done with a torch, or branch of laurel or olive." "In the writings of Homer," says Ewing, "Essay on Baptism," "I have not met with a single instance of *immersion* as a religious purification." Many instances are given of religious application of water—"all by pouring."

"The heralds ranged  
The *rites* in order. . . . and *poured*  
Fresh water on the hands of all the kings."

—Cow. Il. 298.

3. All these lustrations and purifications, with the "sprinkling of holy water," in Greek and Roman ritual\* were regarded by the eminent Apologist, Justin Martyr, as "imitations of true baptism:" therefore we are warranted in the inference that early in the second century, true baptism was administered by sprinkling and pouring.

4. The testimony of Justin Martyr, according to Thorn to whom I have been indebted for the closing illustration of Patristic exposition, accounts for the *silence* of the enemies of the Gospel respecting the *mode* of Christian baptism as administered by the Apostles.†

\* The heathens themselves had the custom of *sprinkling* with water those who gave themselves up to the worship of any of their Gods.—Bishop Heber.

The Pagan Priest *sprinkled* the multitude with the holy dew by means of an aspergillum, or light brush.

Idem ter socios pura ci cumtulit unda spargens rore levi.—

*Withrow's Cat.* 538.

† Page 283.



The fallibility of the Fathers, and their vagaries in regard to baptism, have been emphatically asserted. That they lived to witness and to testify in regard to *immersion* and other corruptions of the church, we do not for a moment dispute. The position has been taken, by strenuous advocates of immersion, that the Greek verb, means to *dip* and only to dip through all Greek literature. *A single passage* from any of these Greek writers, destroys the whole position and completely overturns the argument.

A single citation in evidence of patristic use of *baptizo* might have sufficed, but *abundantia* it has been shewn:

*Whose are the Fathers!*

#### VII. EPHESIAN AND EARLY FONTS.

The excavations which were commenced in Ephesus in 1863, and which have been largely aided by the funds of the British Government, have resulted in most important discoveries. An account of these excavations and discoveries with numerous and valuable illustrations, has just now been published in a splendid and scholarly volume. The work of Mr. Wood has commanded unqualified approbation. "The Discoveries," says an able reviewer in the *British Quarterly*, "will occupy a place in the archæological lore which will hand his name and fame to posterity." Amongst the objects found in digging on the east side of the form was a large basin of stone (*breccia*), fifteen feet in diameter, raised upon a pedestal. It is figured in the book, and shews a shallow receptacle for water—*about nine inches deep*. It is supposed by Mr. Wood, whose sagacity and scholarship, tested through many years, have rarely been at fault,

that it was used in early Christian times for the baptism of converts to Christianity, and he uses it as an argument *against baptism by immersion up to the third century*. As the most recent discovery, and the latest contribution to the elucidation of a controverted subject, that Ephesian baptismal basin, possibly with a history of its own—previous to conversion for use in the Christian Church, it may have been employed for purposes of *aspersion* in the great Ephesian temple of Diana itself,—has for us a special interest. Evidence from such a discovery, if standing alone, could not be much depended upon, except in a very incidental and collateral way; but it does not, by any means, constitute a solitary proof.

“The baptismal fonts,” says Dr. Robinson, “still found among the ruins of the most ancient Greek churches in Palestine,—as at Tekoa and Gophna, and going back apparently to very early times,—are not large enough to admit of the baptism of adult persons by immersion; and were obviously never intended for that use.”—See Bibl. Res.

The fonts of the early pure centuries of the church, afford no evidence of immersion. It is, of course, only the most ancient baptismal fonts, carrying us back to usages of the Apostolic Church, that can possibly possess any value in this inquiry. No one doubts that immersion, with many other corruptions, came into the church in the fourth century, and for such administration deeper fonts or tanks would be demanded.

The earliest traces of baptismal fonts, and in the earliest *Mosaics* representing baptismal scenes, the *mode* of administration invariably is that of *affusion*.—Cat. 540.

Eusebius speaks of baptisteries without the church

"for those who require yet the purification and *sprinklings* of water and the Holy Spirit."—*Ec. His.*

There is a marble fountain in the crypts of St. Prisca, of which Rev. W. H. Withrow gives an excellent engraving, which, according to tradition, was used for baptismal purposes by St. Peter. Tradition and inscription attest its *extreme antiquity*; and "its basin is quite too small even for infant immersion."—Cat. 537.

The *earliest* representation of baptism which is known to exist is the fresco from the cemetery of St. Calixtus, at Rome. "It is believed," says Dr. Smith's Dictionary of Antiquities, for which the picture has been engraved, "to be of the *second century*." The *mode* represented is that of "*pouring* water from the hand, or from a small vessel in the hand, upon a person standing in shallow water."

An elaborate effort has been made by the able but erratic Robinson, in his "History of Baptism," to obtain evidence from the practice of the early pure ages, in favour of immersion. According to his own acknowledgement, "there were no baptistries within the churches till the *sixth century*."

"Any one" says Thorn, "has only to read Robinson's History of Baptism, and he will presently discover the difficulty the writer labours under, the shifts and contrivances he is obliged to make, and, as pronounced by competent authority, the *perversions* he sometimes displays in order to present anything like precedent for the practice of his fraternity. In fact he has indirectly *established our view of the case*. For justly considering carved work and pictures of baptism made at the time, the surest criterion of ancient modes and ceremonies, he

has been at considerable pains and expense to procure engravings of them—and, what is very remarkable *all the sculpture and paintings of the greatest antiquity*, represents the baptized ones as standing in the water, while the officiating minister *pours* a little of the element on his head.” Robinson, according to the latest published estimate of his work “will be accepted by all as good authority upon ancient baptisteries,”—that is of fonts and rites after the introduction of immersion and other superstitions into the ceremonial of Christian baptism. But Robinson’s evidence has no more to do with the early *uncorrupted* age of Christianity than to use his own phrase the first verse of first Chronicles: “Adam, Sheth, Enosh.”

## VIII. ORIENTAL EVIDENCE.

“Without any literary apparatus,” writes an American missionary, from Constantinople, in 1849, “I have for many years felt confident that the Apostles and *primitive* Christians did not baptize by immersion. I do not find in the climate, dress or social customs of the East anything *to lead to immersion* for baptism—though their religious customs might have led to it.

The geography of Palestine is much opposed to its having been the prevailing custom. The only river with water in it, the whole year, is the Jordan. The *Arish* south of Gaza has no water in it for part of the year. The houses of ancient Jerusalem, as appears by the ruins of the city, had cisterns and *not tanks*. People would not be allowed to defile the water in the large reservoirs by being bathed for *immersion*—as on the day of Pentecost. In various places, on the roads in Palestine, are to be found wells, fifteen feet deep, with steps

to go down to them, for the purpose of supplying travellers. It is by a flight of steps that one arrives at the pool of Siloam. In the Quarantine at Jaffa we descended to the well by a flight of forty steps. Towards Enon, near Salem, in a company of twenty-five horsemen, we pressed on to reach it by night. We wished to encamp there because there was *much water*, or many waters, for ourselves and horses. The *cliffs* around have several "eyes" or springs that give out little *dribblets* of water. How absurd that John, wherever he was, baptizing by immersion, went to Enon because it was only there that he could get enough.

As to the "many waters" or *much water*, "it is equivalent to the phrase Saratoga waters, as often used for the springs. We say in Turkey of a hill near Constantinople, where are scattered several springs: There are many waters there—always using the plural."

In addition to these inferences from the geography and customs of Palestine, we have the evidence of important philological fact: It is generally understood that the language spoken in Judea, at the period of the Saviour's ministry was not the Greek of the New Testament, but a mixed dialect of Syriac and Chaldaic. In this language, the language of the common people of Syria, the language of the people to whom John administered baptism, the language in which the Saviour taught the people, the language in which the Apostles received their commission, the word for baptize is taken from a Hebrew word "to stand, to continue to subsist, &c." "We come almost necessarily," says Professor Stuart, "to the conclusion, then, inasmuch as the Syriac has an appropriate word which signifies to

dip, plunge, immerse, and yet *it is never employed* in the Peshito, that the translator did not deem it important to designate any particular *mode* of baptism; but only to designate the rite by a term which evidently appears to mean *confirm, establish, &c.*" \*

And, not only in "the lands of the Bible," and in the language of the people, but, in the traditions of Johanneic Baptism, as perpetuated in Eastern religious rite, we find incidental illustration of the New Testament mode of baptism' "We have an instance," says Richard Watson, in *Theological Institutes*, "in the customs of a people of Mesopotamia, mentioned in the journal of Wolfe the missionary. This sect of Christians call themselves *the followers of John the Baptist*. Among other questions, Mr. Wolf inquired respecting their *mode* of baptism, and was answered: *the priests or bishop baptize children thirty days old. They take the child to the banks of the river and the priest sprinkles the element upon the child.* Mr. Wolfe asks, Why baptize in rivers? Answer: *Because St. John the Baptist baptized in the river Jordan.* Thus we have in modern times river-baptism without immersion." †

The chief *value* of this fact of modern administration, and that for which it has *mainly* been adduced, is to prove that *in the East baptism at a river does not*—numerous affirmations to the contrary notwithstanding—*necessarily imply immersion.*

Thus, again, we obtain—as of incidental and collateral value,—a threefold testimony. The voice of the missionary—after observation of Syrian modes of life;

\* Page 363.

† Volume 12, page 277.

the voice of language—the speech of the Syrian people, as represented by the Syriac Version; the voice of *Johannic* rite—the perpetuation of immemorial Syrian traditions—afford evidence in favor of *affusion*. These also agree in one.

#### 9. CHURCH OF THE CATACOMBS.

“Among the cultivated grounds,” says the Poet Prudentius, quoted by Rev. W. H. Withrow, in his exhaustive and scholarly book on the “Catacombs of Rome,” “lies a deep crypt with dark recesses. On all sides spreads the densely-woven labyrinth of paths, branching into caverned chapels and sepulchral halls; and throughout the subterranean maze, through frequent openings penetrates the light.”

These immense excavations, galleries and deep caverned recesses, from which stones and sand had been dug for building the streets and palatial structures of trophied Rome, were in days of persecution the refuge of early Christians, where tens of thousands of the followers of Christ lived and died, and where it has been estimated that not less than *four millions*, many of them forming part of the noble army of martyrs “found cemetery.”

For a thousand years the catacombs were closed. In the sixteenth century the ancient galleries were opened and explored in search of evidence for discussion upon relics—then a question of exciting interest. The explorers were employed as they traversed the vaults and galleries of this subterranean city. They found marble records, carved slabs, and sculptured sarcophagi: witnesses from the purest days of the church; and after

the long silence of centuries still eloquent in their testimony for the truth.

The deepest and most distant caverns and intricate labyrinths were of course the abode of the church in the days of severest trial, and therefore of greatest purity: to the testimony of these most ancient records, rude and simple though they might be, and of little value as works of art, we accord the very highest and most distinguished recognition.

It is with no ordinary interest that we descend into those subterranean abodes. Here we worship with the primitive church. We are not far away from the Apostolic age. We mingle with them in sacred service. We meet them in Eucharistic solemnity. We decipher the record of their faith. We are in immediate contact with scenes of baptismal administration. What then is the testimony of the pure primitive church, and of the "early unconscious art-record," in regard to christian baptism? There could be no possibility of tampering with this testimony: and whatever its voice may be, the result must be inevitably accepted. During the dark ages monks were not unfrequently employed, in the scriptorium, in erasing the words of inspiration from ancient and valuable Greek manuscripts. But during all these centuries there were witnesses for the truth carefully concealed in caverned recesses and subterranean silence. For a thousand years their lips were sealed, and now when their voice of attestation is needed, we find ourselves in direct communication with the ancient church, of the Catacombs: rich in christian remains and "eloquent in the mute, marble records of the young ages of the faith."



Following the guide, into those deep and tangled labyrinths, we are conscious that the system of doctrine in relation to the christian baptism contended for in these pages is about to be subjected to a decisive test; but on the side of truth there can be no fear for the result. We have no dread of a conflict of testimony. The labyrinths and recesses of the Catacombs are deep and intricate; but in their remains and records we are brought into immediate contact with the purest period of the church. Even without the aid of an

## ARIADNE THREAD,

we may, in search of evidence, fearlessly traverse the maze and winding passages of crypt and cavern.

“The testimony of the Catacombs respecting the mode of baptism, as far as it extends, is strongly in favor of aspersion or affusion. All their pictured representations of the rite indicate this mode, for which alone the early fonts seem adapted; *nor is there any early art evidence of baptismal immersion.* It seems *incredible*, if the latter were the original and exclusive mode, of Apostolic and of Divine authority, that it should have left *no trace* in the earliest and most unconscious art-record; and have been supplanted therein by a new unscriptural and unhistoric method. It is apparent, indeed, from the writings of the fourth and fifth century, that many corrupt and unwarranted usages were introduced in connection with this Christian ordinance that greatly marred its beauty and simplicity. It is unquestionable that, at that time, baptism by immersion was practised *with many superstitious and unseemly rites.* But in the evidences of the *Catacombs*, which are the

testimony of an earlier and purer period, *there is no indication of this mode of baptism.*"—*Withrow's Catacombs*, p. 535.

There are, in the ancient Catacombs, the tombs of *Neophytes*, that is *baptized* persons—one of which, "Candidus the neophyte, who lived twenty months:"—"Flavia Jovina, who lived *three* years and thirty days, a neophyte, in peace:"—"Innocentia Preditus who lived six years, eight months, eleven days:" "the well-deserving neophyte Romanus, who lived eight years and fifteen days, he rests in peace."

The following *resume*, says Mr. Withrow, of the principal patristic evidence is corroborated by the testimony of the Catacombs. Justin Martyr, about A. D. 148, speaks of persons sixty and seventy years old who had been made disciples of Christ (*ematheteuthesan*—the very word employed in Matthew xxviii, 19) in their infancy. Irenæus expressly speaks of 'infants, little ones, children, youth, and the aged, as regenerated unto God,' which phrase he elsewhere applies to baptism; *Infantes et parvulos, et pueros, et juvenes, et seniores*. Tertullian, indeed, in the third century, recommends the delay of baptism, especially in the case of infants: *Cunctatio baptismi utilior est, præcipue tamen circa parvulos*—an indication of the Montanist heresy, into which he fell, which regarded post-baptismal sins as inexpiable. The practice, however, continued, and Origen expressly asserts that little children were baptized for the remission of sins. *Parvuli baptizantur in remissionem peccatorum*—which custom, he says, the Church handed down from the Apostles: *Ecclesia ab apostolis traditionem suscepit*. When the question arose, in the third century, not whether baptism should be administered to infants,

but whether it should be administered before the eighth day, Cyprian and a Council of sixty-six African bishops unanimously decided that the right should be denied to none, even in earliest infancy: *Universi potius judicavimus nulli hominum nato misericordiam Dei et gratiam denegandam*. 'And this,' says Augustine, 'is no new doctrine, but of Apostolic authority': *Nec omnino credenda, nisi Apostolica esse traditio*. The later Fathers abound in similar testimonies. The infant children of heathen converts were baptized *immediately*, and the older ones when instructed. The prevalence of the Montanist heresy, which regarded as inexpiable all sins committed after baptism, led many to *postpone* its reception, although this practice was strongly censured by the Church."\*

\* It has been objected to *resume* in reference to Origen that it possesses no value—that little children, *parvuli*, are said to have been baptized. But the context abundantly and incontestably proves that the reference of this eminent Greek Father was to children from their infancy. The question in contention was not that of baptism, but of original sin: Addi his etiam illud potest, ut requiratur quid causæ sit, cum baptisma ecclesiæ in remissionem peccatorum detur, secundum ecclesiæ observantiam etiam parvulis quod ad remissionem deberet et indulgentiam pertinere gratia baptismi superflua videretur.—*Hom. in Levit.* "Besides all this it may be learnt since the baptism of the Church is given for the remission of sins, why, according to the usage of the Church, is it likewise given to little children? Whereas if there was nothing in little children that needed remission and mercy, the grace of baptism would be superfluous to them." *Parvuli* (says Origen in a Homily on Luke) baptizantur in remissionem peccatorum. Quorum peccatorum? Vel quo tempore peccaverunt? Aud quomodo potest ulla lavatio in parvulis ratio subsistere, nisi juxta illum sensum de quo paulo ante diximus; nullus mundus a sorde nec si unius diei quidem fuerit vita ejus super terram? Et quia per baptismi sacramentum natiuitatis sordes deponuntur propterea baptizantur et parvuli.—*Hom. in Luc.* "Little children are baptized for the forgiveness of sins. Of what sins? Or when did they commit them? Or how can any reason be given for baptizing them but only according to that sense which we mentioned a

We have, therefore, testimony from the early christian tombs of the most positive and express kind; and in perfect consonance with the clear teachings of the word of God.

"A glow of fellowship with the first believers," says Rev. William Arthur, eloquently deciphering for us the old records, "lights up our very soul. *Antiquity is on our side.* Church of the Catacombs! thou art our Church. Martyrs of the Catacombs! we are partakers with you of like precious faith; your Lord is our Lord, your faith is our faith, *your baptism is our baptism.* We exult in the sense of our *oneness* with Christ's earliest followers"—

CORPUS IN CHRISTO UNUM SUMUS.

## CHAPTER IX.

### CONTROVERSY AND CRITICISM.

"And the contention was sharp between them, that they parted asunder one from the other."—*Acts of the Apostles.*

"To avoid the subject, because it is controversial, is neither honest nor wise."—*Rev. J. C. Ryle.*

little before? None is free from pollution though his life be but the length of one day upon the earth; and for that reason infants are baptized, because by the sacrament of baptism the pollution of our birth is taken away."

The question in dispute was that of original sin, and affirmative argument was based upon the admitted practice of infant baptism; and, even were other patriotic writers all silent on the subject, this testimony, of an incidental kind, would warrant belief and assertion in regard to the usage of the Apostolic age and of the early church.

"One of them has stated in a very few words the entire basis of their system ; the acceptation of the Greek word—the circumstances of our Lord's baptism—those of the Eunuch—allusion in Romans to a burial—this is in fact the whole."—Thorn.

Arguments and ideas *ex adverso*, in their usual spirit and accustomed form of intolerance and exclusiveness—marshalled for the controversial arena—flanked and supported in imposing array by united and combined resources—elaborated and consolidated through all the year between, have been reproduced in permanent form : and *Baptisma* has had to bear the brunt of potent publication.

A few of the sheets *only* belonging to different chapters,—floating incidentally and unexpectedly upon some passing breeze—as they fell from the press, dropped at my feet. It would not perhaps be deemed unfair to accept these fugitive pages, upon the average, as fair and respectable representatives of *review* attempt as a whole : *Ex uno disce omnes*.

Whatever may be the incidents or exigencies of local agitation, however, the main points at issue are the same through all the range of baptismal disputation. In every extension and direction of latitude and longitude they are to be determined by one meridian. The aim has been, throughout the following series of disquisitions, to select passages of widely representative interest ; and to deal chiefly with forms and phases of the subject which, at nearly every point, in season and out of season, have been prominently and pertinaciously pressed to the front.

The discussion, of necessity, as in every such essay, must take us beyond the domain of Inspiration and the direct teaching of God's infallible word—to which logically this question belongs.

There are, it will be found, certain considerations of merely collateral interest to which controversialists have accorded conspicuous recognition; and which, on that account, claim a somewhat close and searching scrutiny.

The Review, as represented by *fugitive* sheets, amply sufficient for the purpose, is largely composed of quotations—bad, good and indifferent. But, characteristically and conspicuously, it is deficient and defective in the quality and quantity of inspired *dicta probantia*; and the paucity and poverty of positive and authoritative *scriptural* teaching are barely concealed and but ill-protected by flimsy array and the thin disguise of varied and multifarious quotations: “to the law and the testimony.”

Through the several sections of this chapter, as indicative of the standpoint occupied, a passage or more has been selected from some standard author upon the subject; and, then, from *review*, follows the paragraph by which the question for discussion is directly introduced.

#### I. BAPTISMA.

“It fortifies my soul to know  
That though I perish, Truth is so:  
I steadier step when I recall  
That if I slip, Thou dost not fall.”

—A. H. Clough.

“It may be surprising to some to see so large a book written as a review of so small a work as Baptisma.”—*Review*.

The substance of *Baptisma*—which has provoked the spirit of criticism and led to the publication of a “review”—was preached to my own congregation, published by request, *inscribed* “to the young people of my

own charge"—nearly *One Hundred* of whom, at that time had been upon profession of faith publicly received into communion with the Church. They were consequently only imperfectly instructed, and but slenderly prepared for the *questio vexata* by which the community was then disturbed.

In response to request of very many persons present on that occasion, wearied with the strife of water, and grateful for a higher theme, the Sunday evening sermon was published. It was not, at the time, deemed any valuable contribution to a vexed question, or proposed as a complete presentation of the subject; but mainly as an expression of interest in "the young people" of my charge,—to whom it was specially addressed.

In early life, then recently from England, never having studied any standard work upon the question of baptism, and never, except through the Mormonite Missionaries, having heard any discussion upon the controverted points of baptism, I was subjected to a painful experience. The first shock of contact with immersion in all the strength and exclusiveness of a community in which, at that time, the Baptist denomination was the dominant religious body, was a painfully disturbing and perplexing feeling. My equipment for discussion, upon that question, was of the most insignificant character. The *positiveness* of assertion, and the vehemence of argument to be encountered at every point led me into the *grievous mistake*, since then abundantly apparent, of *attaching an importance to the matter of mere mode which it does not, according to any canon of Christianity or common-sense, deserve or demand.*

All my sympathies and sensibilities, at that time, and since then the feeling has only deepened, instinctively recoiled from the possibility of having to desert a denomination to which, under God, I owed all that I most highly value and esteem in life—an idea which nothing but youth and inexperience could for a moment have justified. Of all the evangelical churches, chiefly because of its sectarian narrowness, and the tendency of stress in mode to baptismal regeneration, the Baptist Denomination was the least attractive; yet there was a feeling that the claims of truth must be supreme, and that if, as the result of investigation, duty pointed in that direction, the sacrifice *at any cost of feeling*, must be made.

The inquiry was scarcely commenced, when, with the blessing of God upon inexperienced effort, a revival of religion, of more than ordinary depth and power, gathering densely crowded audiences, and producing a profound impression, broke out in that community; and, as the result, many people were baptized with water. For nearly four months, having ordinarily two services on the week day and three on Sunday, that work was continued. The time which could be spared from special services, and hours that ought to have been devoted to sleep, far in the night, were devoted to close and systematic study of Christian baptism. The result of that examination was *a most decided conviction of the validity of baptism, infants and adults by affusion.*

In the years between, I have not, in any exceptional way, been brought into close contact with immersionist agitation; and the renewed examination of the subject, as the result of prevalent discussion and dissension, has



only tended to deepen and confirm the impression and conviction consequent upon earlier inquiry.

In no part of the discussion has there intentionally been a disposition to take advantage of a quibble; and there has been no consciousness of flaw or fallacy in the principal Scriptural arguments which have been adduced. The book has been written, under many disadvantages, with a fulness and force of conviction, which, finding free and unfettered expression, *have not*, upon my own mind, in regard to all facts and teachings of the word of God upon this subject, *left the shadow of an uncertainty*,

I have only to add, that, if "Baptisma" be found unequal to the ordeal of "review," *let it perish!* The truth, ever invulnerable and invincible, will secure stronger and more skilful auxiliaries.

## II. CLASSIC.

"In attaching to the verb," *baptizo*, "this generic sense, we take our stand upon the solid foundation of the usage of the Greek language through all periods concerned: including the classical, the Biblical and the Patristic."—*Prof. Wilson*.

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"My third purpose is to shew you that *baptizo* does not *invariably drown its object* even in Greek literature."—*Review of Baptism*.

It is not very difficult to prove that in passages, from Greek authors, *baptizo* does *drown* its object—*sinks* it beneath the swirling waters, never to rise again; but

that significance of mode does not surely meet the demands, or satisfy the exegetical necessities of modern immersion.

If mode must be strenuously insisted upon as the distinctive idea of *baptizo*, it would be easy to show that many passages *sink, soak, drown, &c.* If the action of immersion were the only one permissible, as claimed through all discussions upon this subject, it would adapt and shape itself to the exigencies and requirements of every passage: It fails to do this, and therefore we claim that the theory of "*immersion* without exception" is an untenable one.

In support of the position, thus taken, the definition of the eminent lexicographers, *Liddell and Scott*, is highly eulogised and their "*latest edition*" quoted. The special value of that edition, and of such others, as most of us possess, in regard to this *one* word, was made apparent in the somewhat famous *Graves-Ditzler* discussion.

"Of late this lexicon has been completely *manipulated by immersionists*. Yet it does not sustain them for the simple reason that their whole history is so monstrous, *unscientific and absurd*, it cannot be sustained.

"*Liddell and Scott* first define *baptizo*, "to dip repeatedly, dip under;" second, they erase the second part, and put it "dip repeatedly;" then they change again, and give '*wet, pour upon.*' . . . . In the sixth edition it is patched again. They now put it '*immerse*,' a word not in any early edition. Here they have changed and re-changed again this lexicon on this one word. *They have done so on no other word.* It is a good lexicon—admirable. But who can attach any importance to what they say on this word after these facts?"

But "Liddell and Scott," like other lexicographers, makes an important *distinction*, and one that goes to the very core of the subject, between classic and New Testament *baptizo*. They give the ancient usage, with illustrations from Greek authors, and then, as special and distinct definition of the subject, give the *New Testament meaning* : "To BAPTIZE."

In the valuable lexicon of Dr. Edward Robinson, the eminent scholar and Oriental traveller, we have, as the definition of *baptizo*, the following :

1. To wash, to lave, to cleanse by washing, to wash oneself, to perform ablution.
2. To baptize, to administer the rite of baptism.

In a "note" appended to the fuller definition, several considerations are urged in favor of *ablution* and *affusion* as the New Testament sense of the word :

The lexicographer *Gases*, a learned Greek, "a member of the Greek Church, held in high estimation by his countrymen"—"whose lexicon is generally used by native Greeks"—gives to *baptizo* the following definitions : To *wet*, *moisten*, *bedew*, to *wash*, to *bathe*, to *draw*, to *pump water*.

In the report of the "Graves-Ditzler Debate," a volume of over one thousand pages, which now lies before me—an exhaustive discussion of baptism—Dr

Ditzler quotes from some *twenty-five* lexicographers, besides other authorities, in evidence of *wet, pour, sprinkle, &c.*, as amongst meanings of *baptizo*.\*

In contention for the *generic* sense of the Greek verb—in opposition to the unsatisfying and unscientific *modal* idea—demonstration of the unreasonable and untenable nature of certain unqualified assertions concerning the distinctive force and significance of *baptizo*—in reference to the march of Alexander's army, a passage was cited from Strabo :

The sea having flooded the path at the foot of Mount Climax, in Lycia, the troops of Alexander "were in the waters a whole day, baptized up to the middle"—baptized, but not immersed :

"How would it do," asks reviewer, "to read, and they marched all day in water, *poured* as far as the waist? *Absurd!*" &c.

Had the *contra* argument been advanced in the direction of pour and sprinkle, as the fundamental idea of classic Greek *baptizo*, there might have been sense and appositoness in the *ad absurdum* treatment of the subject. But the idea of mode, as the distinctive and essential meaning of *baptizo* has been utterly and absolutely repudiated. We do not propose to degrade a word consecrated by inspiration, to such mean and

\* The substance of several pages of definitions, with pertinent and forcible application, has been reproduced by Rev. D. D. Currie, in "Wesleyan," May 25, 1878.

ignoble use. It admits of higher treatment; and the reference in this connection to "poured as far as the waist," can only be regarded as a feeble, frivolous attempt at burlesque.

The soldiers of Alexander, according to Strabo, were a whole day in the water—"baptized up to the middle." They were not *plunged* down. They were not taken out. They were in the water a whole day. Does the reviewer call that immersion. Do standing and wading in the tank constitute an immersion? Then the pastor of the Baptist Church is immersed every time he goes into the tank, and that traverses all his declamation about "*one immersion*." In earlier life, in the department of mining, dialing and levelling in old mines, which had been a family proprietorship, I have, oftener than once, waded through a whole day, nearly to the waist, exposed occasionally to dripping water from the roof, but was never conscious of being *immersed*.

The historian, Diodorus Siculus, speaking of the overflow of the Nile, when swollen to an unusual height says that "the greater number of the land animals overtaken by the river perished, being baptized—baptizomena"—Lib. 1, 417. From this graphic description of the Syceilian historian who lived and wrote very near to the New Testament times, the facts of the case can be

very easily comprehended. The inundation of the Nile took place with such suddenness that the cattle feeding upon the adjacent pasture-plains were unable to make their escape. In most cases overwhelmed by rushing waters they were destroyed; and the result was, according to the Greek writers, a baptism—a changed condition. There is a principal of interpretation by which the use of the verb, in such a connection, can consistently with its higher New Testament sense, be vindicated; and which would account for its use by inspired writers. But if the purely modal idea must press its claims the passage affords no warrant for immersion; and if it did it would only prove that immersion was destruction. The animals, however, were not taken to the Nile; but the swollen waters of the Nile swept over the animals. The object was not put beneath the element. It was the element overflowing the object.

A passage from Josephus, in like manner, has frequently been cited and reiterated as incontestable proof of the modal significance of the Greek verb; and yet close scrutiny of the case leads us to just the opposite conclusion. Effect and not mode is the governing principle of the word as employed in that narrative. The historian of the Jewish wars describes the foul death of the youthful high-priest, Aristobolus: "Sent by night to Jericho, and there he died, being baptized, *baptizomenos*, by the Galatians in a pool." It might have been argued with fair shew of probability, had this been the solitary account of the high-priests' death, that he had been plunged by the Galatians into the deep pool;

and that the fatal immersion was in action the baptism of Aristobulus. But in the "Antiquities" of Josephus there are some additional details of that murderous deed: "*Presstug* him down always as he was *swimming*, and *baptizing* him as in sport." Three things in this account are indisputable: 1. Aristobulus was dipped, for he was swimming; but that was not the baptism. 2. He was pressed down as in sport; but that action has its own distinctively descriptive word in the original text: it was not the baptism. 3. There was, as the effect of that pressure beneath the closing waters, a completely changed condition; and, in consonance with the genius and use of the word through ages of Greek literature, that effect was designated a *baptism*. The passages thus adduced may be accepted as specimens of classic citations, around which this controversy has been maintained. We are compelled to the conviction that there has been a fundamental mistake in claiming mode as the essential idea of this vexed word. The result of investigation has been to shew that, generally, if not exclusively, it expresses an effect produced—rather than the precise mode by which it may have been accomplished.

Another example cited was the oracle in regard to Athenian fortunes: "As a bladder thou mayest be *baptized*, but thou art not destined to *sink*." "Does the rational being live," asks the reviewer, "who will say that the bladder, now lightly floating upon the water, but recently pressed beneath the surface, was not immersed?"

In that Sybilline line, cited by Plutarch there is nothing about "recently pressed beneath the water." That expression and the idea which it carries are pure *assumption*. Two things are affirmed by the oracle: the bladder floating upon the water could *not possibly sink*; and that bladder, over which curling waves were sending their drenching spray, was *baptized*. There was baptism; but *no sink*, no soak—no immersion.

There are two principles of interpretation, bear in mind, applied to *baptizo* in classic literature:

1. That of the immersionist who contends for immersion without exception—that is *plunged into water*: Less than this cannot satisfy the demand, or justify the assumptions, of an exclusive system. Two classes of examples from classic Greek very effectually dispose of this theory and its magnificent pretensions:

A class of passages in which *baptizo* is applied to vessels; and which, upon that principle of interpretation, *sinks* them beneath the troubled wave and leaves them to rot in the deep waters. *Qui nimium probat, nihil probat.\**

In passages of various signification: the sword of Ajax *baptized* with blood flowing from the neck of Cleobulus—the bladder, that *could not possibly sink*, *baptized* by the spray of the breaking sea-wave—the *baptism* of "all Asia:" not plunged by the conqueror into the Gulf of Argolis; but "subjected to a new state or condition of things by a triumphant victory which gave Greece a controlling influence over Asia"—the boy *baptized* by bewildering questions—passages too numerous to be cited demonstrate the fallibility of the immersionist

\* "He who proves too much, proves nothing."



principle of interpretation. In fact the chief Baptist scholar, from whom the reviewer cites his most valuable passages, in contention for *dipping* as the supreme ideal of *baptizo* has only ventured in some six or seven passages to translate *dip*.

"That any Baptist writer, thoroughly committed to dipping, should be unable to introduce the word, *on which his system hangs*, in more than one passage in twenty, is a fact which, of itself, *suggests the gravest doubt about the justness of the translation in any case.*"

2. A more rational theory, in regard to classic *baptizo* claims that "the master-key" of interpretation is not mode of action, but the *effect* produced: that the demand for "completely changed condition," as an essential idea, is abundantly met by any mode, and through any competent agency. Proof of this position, clear, intelligible and satisfying, has been furnished in a previous chapter; and every example cited by the reviewer, from Conant, in a most decisive manner, affirms and illustrates this principle of interpretation.

"In the classic," says the veteran Professor Hodge, —the Nestor of modern Theology,— "in the Septuagint and Apocryphal writings of the Old Testament, in the New Testament, and in the writings of the Fathers, the words *bapto* and *baptizo*, and their cognates, are used with such latitude of meaning as to prove the assertion that the command, to baptize is a command to immerse, to be utterly unauthorized and unreasonable."\*

One or two of the citations demand special notice because of the Greek construction: "Since the mass of iron drawn red hot from the furnace is *baptized with water: baptizetai hudati, &c.*" Conant followed by review-

\* Systematic Theology, vol. 3 : p. 526.

er, has "plunged in water;" but unquestionably the verb *baptizo* and the *dative* of the instrument demand "baptized *with* water." Had the Greek author intended to convey the idea of plunging, the verb *baptizetai* would have been followed by *eis to hudor*. Two methods of cooling and tempering iron and steel are resorted to in the forge. The accusative with the preposition would have conveyed the notion of applying the iron to the water; but the *nude* dative, *hudati*, signifying the instrument, applies the water to the "mass of iron," and the fiery glow is "quenched *with* water."

Another example. A citation from *Æsops Fables*, through Conant, because of a similar construction claims recognition: "And dipping tow in oil, &c." The correct translation of the passage: *kai stupeion elaiō baptisas*, &c., would be "and baptising the tow with oil."\*

"Here we have," says reviewer, in exposition of the Greek extract, the dative *elaiō* without the preposition *en*, and it is correctly translated *in* oil, and no true Grecist will translate it any other way. In Luke 3: 16, we have the dative *hudati* without the preposition *en* and it *must* be translated *in* water."

*It must be translated in water! It must be!*" contends this latest representation of Baptist scholarship. "It *must* be!" Hear this, ye *shades* of the mighty dead, departed scholars, venerated translators! Ye invariably rendered the dative of the instrument, in all these pas-

\* For the benefit of the reader who understands Greek, the original text of Conant's extract is reproduced. Unfortunately we are unable to furnish the passage as it has been quoted: the typographical resources by which this publication is limited, do not admit of the use of *Greek character*. In this edition of *Baptisma* the reader must be satisfied with the Roman letter; and in most cases the familiar form will be most welcome. To students of Greek text, another class of books will be available.

sages, "*with water and with the Holy Ghost and fire*;" "but no true Grecist will translate it" thus: Ye were not true Grecists! Your Oxford and Cambridge scholarship must all go for nothing. "It *must* be translated *in water*." It is to be hoped that the voice of a true Grecist will penetrate the Jerusalem chamber, and that the learned men who are engaged in the Revision of the English Bible will hear and heed! It may not be wise, however, to hold out any delusive hope. The reviewer may rest assured that no such canon of interpretation, as that which he claims, can be adopted in revision; and if *hudati* must be translated "*in water*," he may as well go in for an immersionist Bible of his own.

As only the very strongest case can justify the unqualified assertion of the reviewer, and as we may take it for granted that all the force of the immersionist argument is to be encountered at this point, let us examine the position a little more closely.

The passage from *Æsop* may be collated with one of similar construction from *Ezekiel*: "I anointed thee *with oil*." There is the same structural expression. There is in each passage the dative of the instrument. Must the text in *Ezekiel* be rendered "*in oil*?" The anointing of oil, which was done by pouring is perfectly compatible with the sense of the expression; but a "*soak in oil*" would not be a pleasant experience.

The translation of *en hudati*, "*with water*," and still more imperatively does the *nude* dative press its claims for the same form of expression, has been fully discussed in an earlier chapter. A review of the subject has tended to deepen the conviction of the validity of that reasoning:

1. It is grammatically accurate: The preposition governs *the dative of the instrument*, and by an imperative law of construction, claims the rendering "*with water.*"

2. It harmonises with *historic* fact: the Spirit was *poured* out, the fire streamed down; and therefore it was baptism *with* the Holy Ghost and fire.

3. Theological definiteness of idea and expression demands the application of the element to baptized persons: "To represent the Holy Ghost as the passive recipient of the souls of men baptized within it is *an error subversive of his divinely revealed office and work* as the AGENT ever active in *applying* to the souls of men the fruits of redeeming love."

Thus an essential law of grammatical construction, an important historic statement, and a principle of sound Scriptural exegesis, meet in distinct accord. Fact, philosophy and structural expression, through classical and Biblical literature, are in perfect consonance. *These agree in one.*

## NOTE.

In the closing chapter of *Baptisma*, the conclusions of DR. DALE have been very fully accepted. "The author" says "Watchman and Reflector" (Baptist) "shews a large acquaintance with his subject." "It is," says Dr. Cummings, late President of Middletown University, "the most exhaustive discussion of the topic that I have ever met with." "More and more of late," says Dr. Plumer of Columbia Theo. Sem., "our Baptist brethren have appealed to philology. I have wondered at this: There is no weaker point in the argument

for their practice—as *Scapula's lexicon* would enable any one to see—as Dr. Dale has proved beyond all reasonable doubt.” “I can truly say,” writes Dr. Smith, Union Theo. Sem., “that for thorough investigation, clear and logical discussion, scholarly and discriminating exegesis, few works have ever afforded me as much unmingled satisfaction. Dr. Dale has succeeded in overthrowing the immersionist stronghold; and, while the course of reasoning and investigation is thorough and conclusive, the style, in courtesy and good humor, presents a most incomparable specimen of polemical discussion.” Were it necessary whole pages might be occupied with testimonies and statements of a similar character, from the most eminent scholars of all denominations.

In addition to classic usage, several *patristic* citations have been made from Dr. Dale. My own library contains only a very limited selection of Patristic works; and I have been compelled to take these passages at second hand. It will be assuring to know, upon the best authority, that Dr. Dale obtained from Paris the *original* works of the Fathers to the end of the fourth century; and that, therefore, the quotations are thoroughly reliable.

In regard to a quotation from Cyril which, in *Baptisma*, was quoted from Dr. Beecher, the accuracy of which has been challenged, Dr. Dale, in a *private communication*, writes :

1. “I limited my investigation (of the Fathers) to the first four centuries : Cyril of Alexandria comes in the fifth century, and I had not his work. The quotation from Cyril was not made by me from the original; but

was taken from President Beecher, otherwise I would have made the citation more full—as many might suppose that there was antagonism and contradiction between *bebaptismetha* and *errhantismetha*. This however is not the case. I have since examined the original. It reads thus: *kauseüs de pneuma, &c.*" \*

2. In explanation of the passage in question Dr. Dale writes: "Cyril speaks of three baptisms: (1) by bare water, this was not christian i. e. patristic baptism; (2) sprinkled heifer ashes, sprinkling is not here in opposition to baptizing, but states the manner in which the ashes were applied to effect baptism; (3) by water, to which the Holy Spirit was applied."

Cyril in effect says, as Dr. Murray the correspondent of Dr. Dale construes the text, "I was not baptized with sprinkled ashes but with something better."

### III. AN UNCANONIZED CANON.

"Classical usage can never be certain in respect to the meaning of a word in the New Testament. Who does not know that a multitude of Greek words here receive their coloring from the Hebrew, and not from the Greek Classics?"—*Professor Stuart.*

The contention, throughout the "Review" of "Baptisma," as an "accepted Canon of Criticism," in the interpretation of *baptisma* and *baptizo*, is for "native signification" "classic Greek" and "primary literal meaning."

\* The whole passage from Cyril, cited from the original text, is contained in Dr. Dale's communication; but, as Greek *character* has not been used in this book, its reproduction, in the same form, cannot be made.

The unsoundness of this canon has been already demonstrated. It may be expedient, however, in attempting to dislodge it from false position, and to replace it by a canon of better and truer mould and metal, to employ the leverage of historic and acknowledged fact:—The institutions of Christianity, at the date of classic Greek authorship, and consequently Christian baptism, had as yet *no* existence. The Church of the Apostles and the ordinances of the New Testament, belong to a later period. Classic Greek was never required to embody and express the noble conceptions and ideas of the “glorious gospel of the blessed God or to supply, from its extensive vocabulary, the names which divine Christianity needed for the fitting designation of her institutions and ordinances.

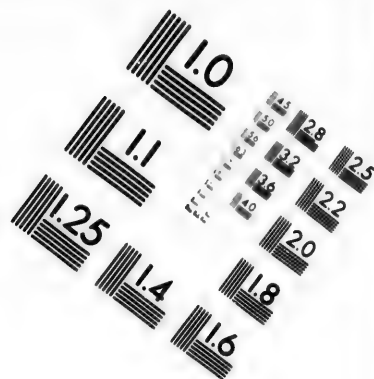
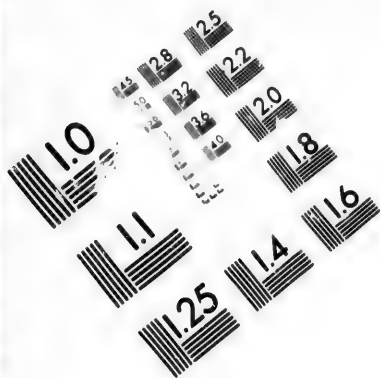
The pyramid of “review”—consequently the structure which it upholds—has been built upon the *apex* of “literal meaning;” and therefore the point deserves and demands a somewhat close and intelligent scrutiny.

The Greek of the New Testament, according to the most accomplished students of classical and sacred literature, has a caste and complexion essentially and distinctly its own. It cannot be compared critically and legitimately with the exquisite purity and rich resource of Attic eloquence—the literary production of the palmiest days of Greece. But, while the style of the New Testament has been thought, by scholars, to lack some of the finer lines of Greek beauty, it has gained greatly by the infusion of *Aramaic* richness and robustness, simplicity and fire. Modified by Hebrew idiom, and magnificence of idea, and especially moulded and reformed by the mind of the Eternal Spirit, the style of

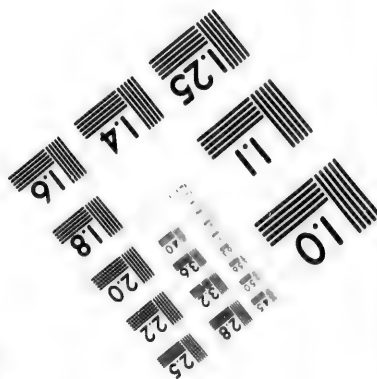
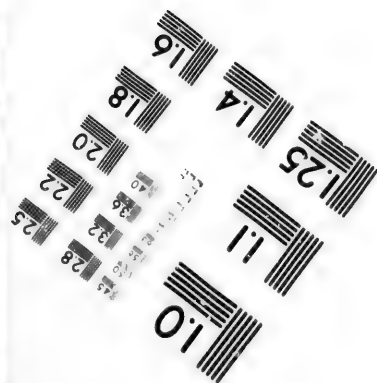
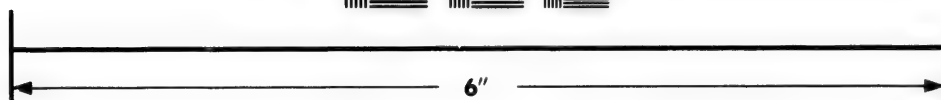
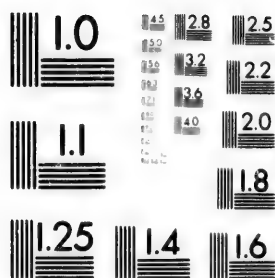
the New Testament became a fitting medium for the communication of thought that breathed and burned—thought that was new to Greek tongue and language. Must we then, for the interpretation of men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, explore the dusty domain and dark heathen recesses of literature? "My speech," said Paul the Apostle, "was not with words of man's wisdom."

In modern life, and in current necessities of speech, as well as in New Testament times and themes,—conditions are similar and the case parallel—we derive designation from ancient literature. The processes of derivation and of manipulation, demanded by modern development, are continually going on: Do we follow, by any law of stern necessity, the *primary* signification? The word *manufacture*, for example, has been derived from *manus*, the hand, and *facio*, to make, and according to derivation and original signification, would apply exclusively to articles made by the *hand*; but the modern application of the word is mainly to the products of *machinery*. The word *carriage* has, in modern life, an established use. Any inquirer upon this subject, not accustomed to philological investigation, may turn to Acts 21, 15, and the fact will become transparent. "And after those days," says the historian of Acts speaking of St. Paul's departure from Cæsarea, "we took up our *carriages*, and went up to Jerusalem." The centuries which have rolled past, since the translation of the Bible, in 1611, have revolutionized the meaning of that word. When employed by the venerable translators, *carriage* meant *baggage*—that which is carried. Now the established sense of *carriage* is *vehicle*—that which carries us.





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In case any discussion might arise concerning modern invention and enterprise—photography, the electric telegraph, the steam-engine, the mammoth factory with its thousand looms and ten thousand wheels—and the force and fitness of current and technical nomenclature, no one would ever dream of making appeal to any writer of the early Anglo Saxon and black-letter periods—to Bede, Wycliffe and Tyndal—to Cædman, Piers Plowman and Chaucer. How then, with any semblance of philological consistency, can we contend for the unsatisfactory and unscientific method, of a rigid adherence and stereotyped sense in the use of words, which carries absurdity upon its front ?

“ Compare particularly the words, to work, faith, to believe, confession, righteousness, to be justified, the called, the chosen, the saints, edification, to edify, apostle, to publish the good tidings, *baptism*, perhaps to break bread for the holy repast (the Agape with the communion) the world, the flesh, fleshy,” etc.\*

*Baptizo*, like most other weighty words of theological import, in the New Testament had been employed previously by native Greek writers ; but, when thus used, the ordinances of the christian church had not been instituted ; and, like all words of grandest significance in the sacred canon, when thus appropriated by inspiration, it was employed in a *new*, a nobler, a consecrated sense.

#### IV. VOICE OF VERSIONS.

“ Ancient versions are of great value in textual criticism, for some of them as *the old Latin and Syriac* are based upon a text more ancient than that preserved to us in any other manuscript.”—*Dr. Barrow*.

\* Winer's “ Grammar of the New Testament.”

"The testimony of every true version of the inspired original is flatly against pouring and sprinkling for baptism and unquestionably proves immersion to be the original act."

In support of the reviewers unqualified assertion we have the authority of Conant's name, the Gothic version of Uphilas, and of sundry *Teutonic* versions in favor of *dipping*. The authority of the European translations cannot be considered of decisive value. Either direct *renderings* of the Vulgate, or taking character from it, they can only claim secondary consideration. Teutonic versions may possibly satisfy Goth and Dutchman, but for the acceptance of an unqualified assertion, of the character indicated, we have a right to expect authority and evidence of a very different kind.

The attention of the thoughtful student is specially solicited to the inquiry which this subject demands. The statement made admits of examination and of definite answer. It should therefore be thoroughly sifted, and if, in the winnowing process, a solitary grain of wheat remains, it will afford some compensation for the trouble of disposing of a considerable quantity of chaff.

One of the most ancient and most important versions of the New Testament, made not far from the close of first century, freighted therefore with the authority of Apostolic and primitive usage, is the *Syriac Peshito*—*version simplex*, as it is usually called, on account of close adherence to the Hebrew and Greek text. This version, according to Dr. Whedon and Professor Stuart "*avoids the Syriac word for immerse.*"\*

\* The word used in the Syriac for baptize is *amad*, corresponding with the Hebrew, *to stand*.

Dr. Detzler, however, contends for a closer affinity of the Syriac word to the Arabic: "*Amada*, to baptize, *to make wet with rain.*"—*Debate p. 14*

After adducing definitions from the lexicons of Buxtorf, Freytag, Castell, Schindler, Dr. Murdock, translator of the *Syriac* New Testament, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Oct. 1850, cited by Dale, says: "This mass of evidence seems to prove beyond controversy, that the primary meaning of the *Syriac* word was *to stand, stand up, stand firm.*" There was evidently in the minds of the first christians an association of idea between the act of *standing* in baptism, and of *stability* in christian profession.

The word *immersion*, strenuously contended for, as the equivalent of *baptism*, comes to us from the Latin verb *immergo*; and, as we are confidently assured that the testimony of versions "unquestionably proves *immersion to the original act,*" we may very naturally expect to find *immergo*, in its various forms, universally employed in *ancient Latin versions of the New Testament.*

The Latin Vulgate, for example, has for many centuries exercised a wide influence on the christian world. It dates back to the latter part of the fourth century. It was the work of St. Jerome—a man of most extensive erudition and of supreme devotion to this work. He perfected himself in the deserts of Syria, at the feet of St. Gregory of Nazianzum, at Rome, collating and revising manuscripts and translations—in the hermitage at Bethlehem, where cloistered seclusion was devoted to the great work of scriptural interpretation. The famous Bethlehem scholar had access to costly treasures of manuscripts, containing the words of Jesus and of Paul, which since then have perished.

The vulgate version thus made, or carefully revised, from the original Greek text, was for a thousand years

venerated throughout the Western Church as the standard of scriptural authority. It constitutes the original and determines the character of most of the earlier European translations. Here then we may surely expect to find *immersion* in all its glory. There was here a noble opportunity for launching the word on its important mission: No! *The verb immergo is not in the vulgate used as the equivalent of baptizo.*

The question demands still closer examination. At the commencement of the Christian Era, the Latin language was beginning to supplant the Greek as the language of the west. It became the vernacular tongue of the western church. At a very early period there were Latin translations of the sacred scriptures—known as the Ante-Hieronymian versions. One of the best of these, according to St. Augustine, was the *Vetus Itala*—or Old Italic. It is thought to have been made or revised by Italian scholars. The earliest Latin translation is supposed to have been made in the former part of the second century. At any rate, before the close of that century it was quoted by Tertullian; and, as he was converted from heathenism comparatively late in life, it was probably to this version that he was indebted for all his knowledge of christianity.

An unrivalled interest attaches to that old Latin translation. The *first* printed volume, on the discovery of the noble art of printing—of itself sufficient to create and to constitute a new epoch—was a *Latin Bible*; and the *first translation* ever made, not even excepting the ancient Syriac, from the sacred Greek of the New Testament, was that *old Latin version.*

We sympathize with geographical and scientific in-

terest which, at different times, have been exhibited in the exploration of "many an ancient river:" the river Nile, for instance, recently traced back to its source, was for ages the problem of African geography.

That Old Latin translation, as a mighty and beneficent stream of living truth, flowed through many centuries and enriched many lands. We travel back, with profoundest interest, along the track of ages, and far away in the early or middle part of the second century, amongst African churches, at that time the seat of a flourishing Christianity, we reach the *source*.

We may only pause for a moment, in the course of investigation, to glance at the editions of Clement and Sixtus, and the decisions of the Council of Trent; but as we come to the noble rendition of St. Jerome, the special commendation of St. Augustine, the revised Itala, and to the fountain of all, the Old Latin version of the second century, our interest deepens and intensifies. We have still to remember, however, that it was the Latin Bible, found in the Erfurt Library, in which Luther read the memorable words, containing the germ and main motive power of the Reformation: "*But the just shall live by his faith.*" \*

Here, then, we have a version of great antiquity, and of acknowledged authority. It dates almost with the completion of the sacred canon. It takes us back nearly to the apostolic age. It is more ancient than any Greek manuscript now extant. It is the original of most continental versions—*translations of a translation*. Even as a contribution to the *Textus Receptus*, for the revision of the authorized version, it possesses no inconsiderable value. That Old Latin Version of the middle

\* *Justus autem in fide sua vivet.*—Vulg.

of the second century; the work of men intimately acquainted with the usages of the apostolic age, followed by the vulgate constitutes, next to the word of God, in its *original form*, the most decisive testimony. In that venerable translation, we are assured that *the Greek verb is never rendered by any form of the Latin immergo*.

In the Latin, as in the English, the consecrated Greek, for baptism, has been transferred and naturalized. Thus, in early and successive Latin versions and revisions, in the very language to which immersion belongs, the claims of the word, for which modern immersionists strenuously contend, have been utterly and absolutely repudiated.

"In the earliest Latin versions of the New Testament," say Dr. Edward Robinson the Lexicographer and eminent Biblical scholar, "as for example the *Itala*, which Augustine regarded as the best of all, and which goes back apparently to the second century and to usage connected with the Apostolic Age, the Greek verb is *uniformly* given in the Latin form *baptizo*, and is never translated by *immergo*, or any like word; showing that there was something in the rite of baptism to which the latter did not correspond."

In three Latin versions, the Vulgate, Beza, and Castalia, which happen to be in my own library, as the rendering of John's testimony:—"I indeed have baptized you with water: but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost,"—Mark 1: 8—we have:

Ego *baptizavi* vos aqua, ille vero *baptizabit* vos spiritu sancto.

Ego quidam *baptizavi* vos aqua ipse vero *batizabit* vos spiritu sancto.



Ego quidam vos aqua baptizavi: at is vos sancto spiritu baptizabit.

The utter rejection of *immergo*, by ancient and authorized versions, in the very language of which the word is a native and in which some recognition might have been expected brands it in this connection, as an intruder and an imposter; and testifies in absolute opposition to all exclusively immersionist assumptions.

In regard to the various European versions which, by the reviewer of Baptisma, have been appealed to, in proof of immersion, we have the suggestive and exclusive fact that, by all the communities of which these translations form the vernacular speech, the practice of baptism by *affusion* obtains as the established mode of administration. In explanation of continental versions we must accept, as incontestable evidence, the continental interpretation—exhibited in the general usage of their churches.

Three European versions, Italian—"the elegant and faithful version of Giovinanni Diodati published in 1607"—the French revision of Jean Frederic Ostervald, and the German version of Martin Luther, are before me; and from the Gospel of Mark 1: 8, as previously quoted, we have the following renderings:—

Lo vi ho battezzatti con acqua: ma esso vi battezeva con lo spiritu santo.—

Il est vrai que je vous ai baptise's d'eau; mais il vous baptisera du Saint Esprit.—

Ich taufe euch mit wasser; aber er wird euch mit dem heiligen geist taufen.

In the interests of immersion we should have had, ..

in these several renderings, the Italian *immerge*, the French *plunger*, and the German *intertauchen*.

If in the Teutonic version, for example, the Reformer Martin Luther, and his accomplished friend Melancthon, had intended immersion for baptism, instead of *taufen*, we should have had the German verb *intertauchen*—the definition of which, according to Adler's dictionary, is: *to dive, duck, submerge, immerge, plunge*.

We are compelled to the conclusion, that *the testimony of every true version of the inspired original, and especially of the Latin translations in which if any were immergo should have been recognized, is flatly against the theory of immersion for baptism, and unquestionably in evidence of affusion.*

V. ANGLICAN TRANSLATION.

“The word baptism is derived from *baptēin* which is to *tinge* and to *imbue*; and because the Hebrew word *tabal* which the seventy render by baptizein, 2 Kings v: 14, is used for *rachatz* which signifies to wash.”—*Pictetus*.

“Why did not the translators of our version translate *baptizo* in the Great Commission as they did in the history of Naaman, 2 Kings v; 14?”

Does the writer of “review,” who proposes the question of the quotation just given, and pressingly demands reply, know that the history of Naaman, in the Old Testament, was rendered from the Hebrew; and that the Gospels, containing the commission, were translated from Greek? Does he comprehend the difference between a personal ablution, in which there was *no administrator*, and a solemn ordinance for administration of which the Apostles received that special commission? Can he understand the essential distinction between a

mere washing at the river and the sacredness and significance of sacramental institution? It is impossible without amazement to ponder such a question; but it indicates, most palpably, *the mist and haze which inwrap and enshroud the reviewer and his subject.*

We may go back, in thought, to the learned Hebrew scholars and theologians, convened at Westminster, having specially in charge the Book of Kings. They are engaged with the history of the Syrian Naaman; and the Hebrew verb, *taval*, they have translated by the Saxon *dip*. We then hasten to Oxford, where another company of eight eminent Biblical scholars, surrounded by musty manuscript and sundry versions of the New Testament, are engaged with the closing part of St. Matthew's Gospel. The consecrated Greek verb, following the analogy of the language, as alone competent to express the grand significance of sacrament and ordinance, they have retained and anglicised as *baptize*.

The Hebraists, at Westminster, we protest, have designated the washing of Naaman a *dipping*: By what law of consistency can you reject that word from your translation of the Commission? Imagine the astonishment of those mighty scholars, saturated with Greek literature, accustomed to accurate expression; unable to brook or bear blundering stupidity which confuses Hebrew and Greek manuscripts, does not comprehend the immense difference between the verbs *dupto* and *baptizo*, and fails to distinguish between a mere lustration and the sacredness of a sacrament.

In the Old Testament narrative, of Naaman's ablution, the translators of the authorized version employed the Anglo-Saxon verb *Dip*. But, when the English Bible

was translated, one meaning of dip was "to wet," "to moisten, &c." It was thus used by Milton, the most eminent standard authority of the period :

"A cold shudd'ring dew *Dips* me all o'er."—*Mask of Comus*.

In the same superb exuberance of fancy, and oriental wealth of imagery, he bathes in dewy rainbow essence :

"And drenched with Elysian dew."

But in that "shuddering dew," and in "Iris there with humid bow," there was no dipping in the sense of *plunging into dew*. The dew descended copiously ; and that *wetting*, like the *sprinkling* of rain, because of its copiousness, by an application of the word permissible at that time, was designated a *dipping*.

This view of the subject is sustained and strengthened by the vulgate version. Instead of *immergo*, which the theory of immersion would imperiously demand, we have the Latin verb *lavo*. \* Elisha sent a message to the Syrian General: "Go and *wash* in Jordan, &c." †

In further vindication of this view of the subject, we have the rendering of the Septuagint. The original word *taval* occurs some *sixteen* times in the Hebrew Bible ; and the common rendering of the seventy is by the verb *bapto*. To this translation, in the Greek of the Old Testament, there are only two exceptions : and one of these passages is the 2 Kings 5, 14,—rendered by *baptizo*. For this exception, several reasons have been urged :

1. That "the Hebrew word, as Gesenius, De-wette, Stuart suppose, may have obtained the secondary

\* "To wash," "to rinse, &c."

† *Vade et lavare—et lavit in Jordane*.

meaning, to cleanse, to purify ;" and that, according to the Septuagint, Naaman *purified* himself.

2. That the word "BAPTIZO, *and never bapto*, was employed by Jewish Greek writers to express ceremonial purification:" and this suggestive and profoundly important fact probably influenced the translators of the Greek version.

3. That *bapto*, according to Dr. Dale, "Johannic baptism,"\* would have carried too strongly the idea of dipping; and that consequently the verb was rendered by baptizo because they meant to express, *not* an act but *effect* or *condition*, or *both*.

The discrimination evinced by the Seventy, in the direction of *affusion*, may account for the uniform rejection of *bapto*, by the inspired writers; and for the adoption of *baptizo*, as the constant designation of the Christian ordinance. In this enquiry there has been no disposition to "repudiate the wisdom and learning of the seventy," or to "condemn the translation of the authorized version." The translators, more than Milton, in his noble English classic, were not responsible for the changes which two centuries and a half have wrought in the use of words. It may only be necessary, not to "ignore the inspiration of the Hebrew text," to add in the way of biblical criticism, the primary meaning of the original word: *Tabal* or *Taval*, according to Fürst,† the learned Hebrew lexicographer, is "to moisten," "to sprinkle," &c. "The fundamental signification of the stem is to moisten, to besprinkle."

And must the fidelity of the venerable translators,

\* Page 28.

† Hebrew lexicon: Dr. Julius Fuerst, University of Leipzig. Fourth edition. Translated by Dr. Samuel Davidson.

then, be impeached or impugned because they did not put "*dip* into the commission,"—*dip* into the name of the Triune One—*dip* into the Holy Ghost and fire—*dip* with repentance—*dip* "into one body"—*dip* "into Moses"—*dip* throughout the New Testament? Even the Baptist denomination ought, from their own *abortive* effort, to have discovered the futility and utter hopelessness of the attempt.

Some years ago the following resolution was passed by the American *Baptist Bible Society* :—

"Resolved, that the fact that the nations of the earth must now look to the Baptist denomination *alone*, for faithful translations of the word of God, a responsibility is imposed upon them demanding, for its full discharge, an unwonted degree of union,, and of strenuous persevering effort throughout the entire body." "The error," says Professor Wilson, "against which this thunder is mainly levelled, consists in the admission of the words *baptism* and *baptize* instead of *immersion* and *immerse*, into the great majority of the translations of the New Testament."

"Mark the consistency of these men. They charge us with using *baptism* as the veil of the original, not its vehicle; yet they call themselves *Baptists*! their churches the *Baptist* denomination!! their Bible Society the Baptist Bible Society!!! In the name of common sense, let them purge themselves of this banned term, before they proceed to the purgation of our Bible." Whenever the denomination stands fairly out for that word, *dip*, and inscribes it on their banners, it will be time enough to condemn the translations for not *putting dipping into the great commission*.

## VI. TESSELLATED QUOTATION.

"A superficial examination of the case will shew that many of the quotations are exceedingly partial and distorted—the truth is but partly told—extracts are improperly made,—and a stress is laid on words and phrases, which the original writers never intended."—*Thorn*.

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"I shall now add a few of the accredited historians, scholars and commentators of all ages, in the Christian Church, which must have weight with every one whose mind is not so filled with prejudice that there is no room for an opposite view of truth, however clearly revealed or firmly established.

"Having given you the voice of history from the first to the beginning of the present century. I will now add a few of the most prominent scholars, theologians, and commentators that the world ever saw."

In characteristic style, quite in keeping with the quotation which has just been made, the reviewer commences with St. Luke, the inspired historian of the Acts, and St. Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ. The Baptist Church had no organized existence until after the Reformation; and yet evangelist and apostle are introduced as *historians of the Baptist Church!!* It was, probably, in anticipation of some such indignity that St. Paul wrote—"I thank God that I baptized none of you:" "I baptized also the *household* of Stephanas," he might have continued; "but you do not acknowledge household baptism, and therefore you do not belong to me, and I do not belong to you."

The "voice of history" begins with Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, the latter part of the fourth century, 374: "Candidates are first *anointed with* consecrated oil; they are then dipped *three* times into the water."—*Orchard's His. of Baptists*.

1. The "voice" of Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem is the starting point of a chain of testimony which professes to go back to the First Century: it belongs to *the end of the Fourth Century*. The chain is vastly too short. It wants many a solid link before it can be made to stretch back to the staple-ring of the First Century.

2. If the "voice" of Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, constitute a valid testimony, it goes to prove that, in dropping the *oil* and in abandoning the *trine* dip, the immersionists of the present time are exceedingly degenerate. Would it not be expedient to return to the unction and to resume the *threefold plunge*?

3. The voice of Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, is in striking accordance with the facts of ecclesiastical history: immersion was introduced into the administration of Christian Baptism at a time when allegory, symbol and superstition fairly ran riot in fantastic and unseemly rite. To represent the putting off the body of sin, the nudity leading to great scandal, *men and women were completely divested of their clothes*. Exorcism, unction insufflation, lighted tapers and other accompaniments were added to the administration of the baptismal ordinance. The descent of three steps into the baptistery came in time to represent renunciation of the world, the flesh and the devil.

The second "voice of history and scholarship" is that of Tertullian, a Latin writer of the early part of the third century: "Then we are three times immersed (*Dehinc ter mergitmur*) answering somewhat more than the Lord prescribed in the Gospel," *i. e.* the three times is somewhat more, &c.—Soldier's Crown, *Conant*.



The whole passage from Tertullian may with advantage be reproduced:

Denique ut a baptisinate ingrediar, aquam adituri, ibidem, sed et aliquanto prius in ecclesia sub antistitis manu contestamur, nos renunciare diabolo, et pompæ angelus ejus. *Dehinc ter mergitamur amplius aliquid respondententes, quam Dominus in Evangelio determinavit.* Inde suscepti lactis et mellis concordiam prægustamus: exque ea die lavacro quotidiano per totam hebdomadam abstinemus,—*De Cor. Milit. Fol. Ed. p. 337.*

1. We have the frank confession of Tertullian that the practice of triune immersion was "more than the Lord prescribed in the Gospel." Knowing as we do, that Tertullian used the Old Latin Bible, in which immersion is never found, we are able to measure accurately the distance of departure from the Lord's teaching.

2. This Carthaginian Presbyter, not long after his conversion from paganism, went over to the Montanist heresy: all post-baptismal sins inexpiable—the essence of baptismal regeneration and the fruitful source of error in the church.

3. Tertullian adds in explanation of the famous passage: on triune dipping, oblations for the dead, *the sign of the cross—crucis signaculo* and other corruptions: "For these and such like rules if thou requirest a law in the scriptures, *thou shalt find none.*"\*

Very decisive is the voice of Tertullian, but adverse to the exclusive claims of immersion, for abstinence from washing, for oblations for the dead, for the sign of the cross, there is *no law of scripture.*

\* *Hæc et aliarum ejusmodi disciplinarum silegium expostules scripturarum, nullum invenies.—De Cor. Milit.*

4. When Tertullian followed the law of scripture, he spoke of *aspersion* of water in baptism.\*

In consequence of the place which Tertullian holds in the list of ancient authorities, first in order of time, considerable attention has been devoted to his testimony.

In regard to these early writers, and to subsequent citation of authorities, we have the assurance, *which* needs however to be taken *cum grano*, "that all are *genuine*, and that "each witness is unquestionable authority."

1. Many of the testimonies are specially exceptionable: They came to us through the pages of Conant and other writers of the same denomination. It has generally been found that immersionist streams, more than other waters, *take touch and tinge from soils and shores which they wash and lave.*

2. We cannot be certain in regard to some of these testimonies and more especially to several citations of previous chapters, that an isolated and slender quotation does justice to the opinions of the writers. Theophylact, the Bulgarian Bishop of the 12th Century—Moses Maimonides, the Egyptian Physician, also of the 12th Century: dark ages, too late by many Centuries, of the Church have been patiently explored in search of evidence for immersion—Theodore Beza, the successor of John Calvin at Geneva—Andrew Schott, the learned German Classicist—Herman Witsius of Utrecht and Leydon—Prof. Rosenmüller, the erudite Leipzig scholar and theologian—"the accredited historians and scholars of all ages:" authorities cited at various points, as well as in general summary, are not of a character and standing

\* Periginem aquae.—*De Pœnitentia* 6.

to warrant unceremonious introduction and matter of course quotation. It cannot be expected that extracts from rare and in many cases almost inaccessible books, will be taken for granted and pass unchallenged—as if from the familiar pages of Lord Macaulay's History or John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.

3. The reviewer, in multifarious citation, plods patiently in the beaten path of laborious predecessors—whose “clouds of witnesses,” in various shapes have brought scorn and contempt to the whole system of testimony. In some cases the writers quoted, though esteemed theologians and divines of their several churches, had no competent acquaintance with the controverted points of Christian baptism: in others the fragments are wrenched from their original connection, and are made to speak in flat contradiction to the promulgated opinions of the writers on that very subject; in not a few instances the passage cited was at best an incidental expression: reflecting fancies and vagaries of the Church Fathers—reproduced from age to age.

“Those authors,” says Prof. Rogers, the eminent and acute Edinburgh Reviewer, “who have a simple desire to establish their point, never needlessly accumulate citations or references. When the thesis is such that authority is essential, or auxiliary to it, they will even then content themselves with the *minimum* of citations. They reckon them by weight not by number—*by the scales not by the bushel*. If we can cite Aristotle why go to Keckermannus—if Bacon, how shall we further confirm the statement by Kettiwigious? Not only is a large part of the citations in these volumes mere stuffing: we are not but feel assured that a great number are simply *pillaged* from previous writers.”

4. Incidental expression, such as many of the testimonies in "review" indicate, can only, in fairness to the writers, be interpreted according to their more definitely expressed opinions upon the same subject.

There was at one time, in the scientific world, conflict of opinion concerning Polemaic and Copernican theories. In the writings of Copernicus, and his adherents, there would be many a passage which, taking caste and coloring from earlier teaching and terminology, would seem to favor the exploded theory. What would be thought of the honesty and common sense of any writer who should ransack the works of the more advanced scientists in search of all such passages, and, then, in the form of demonstration, publish them in evidence of the Polemaic theory of the Solar system? To such an attempt, there would be one short, sharp, decisive answer: Copernicus and his adherents, according to formulated expression, held diametrically the opposite opinion.

There are one or two questions which, in regard to a large proportion of "the most prominent scholars, theologians, and commentators, the world ever saw," will sufficiently indicate the value of their testimony in favor of immersion:

Did they in their most definite utterances teach immersion? No!

Did they in their own ministrations, in solemnization of the baptismal rite, practice immersion? No!

Several of the eminent men, appealed to in this testimony, believed, preached, and practiced baptism by *effusion*. In the name of Truth, then, where is the sense, or the justice, of producing, as authority for im-

mersion, the opinions of men who are known, positively, to have held exactly the contrary belief, and to have practiced the opposite mode?

5. The gross value of the various testimonies, therefore, which have been advanced, as evidence upon the question in disputation, is not by any means as great as the reviewer seems to imagine. They cannot, even in the aggregate, claim any very special recognition. It is not at all apparent, according to the extravagant estimate which the compiler has formed :

“ To *contradict* the evidence of all combined, is an absurdity of which no *scholar* will be guilty.”

Having indicated the utter worthlessness of these testimonies, taken as a whole, for purposes of demonstration, we may dispose of them by summary process.

“ Are the books agreeable to the Koran ? ” asked the fanatical Caliph Omar, when the Alexandrian library was committed to the flames : “ Then burn them, they are unnecessary.” “ Are the writings opposed to the Koran ? Burn them, for they are false.”

There was a principle in that inquiry, of the fierce Saracen, which admits of absolute application to all these authorities :

If in accordance with the sacred Oracles, they are unnecessary ; and if contrary to the word of God, they are *false*.

#### VII. CROSS-EXAMINATION OF WITNESSES.

“ The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.”  
—*Legal Maxim*.

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Amongst the scholars and theologians summoned, in the “ Review of Baptisma,” to testify in favour of

immersion, three—Ruter, Wesley, and Clarke—have been selected as representatives of the Methodist Church. If there had been a disposition fairly to represent the standard teaching of Methodism, the works of men who have made the question of baptism a *special* study—such as Watson and Pope, of the British Methodist Church: Hibbard and Whedon, with many others, of the American Methodist Church—would have been available for testimony.

The supreme appeal throughout this discussion we make to the infallible word of God; and we cannot, when weighed in the balances of the sanctuary against immutable truth, make any exception even in favor of these honoured "witnesses."

There can be no objection in a question of criticism, or of disputed rendering, to the introduction of influential names, and the citation of eminent authorities; but in regard to the main subject of controversy, we can only accept inspired dictum: "*thus saith the Lord.*"

In evidence of the validity of *affusion*, as a Scriptural mode of baptism, one single passage of inspiration: "*I will pour out my Spirit,*" is of more value, when interpreted by the facts of Pentecost, than all these Wesleyan witnesses—even if a thousand times more explicit,—and all the voices of the greatest scholars "the world over saw," thrown into the same scale.

On the ground of a deeper denominational interest, *merely*, we may ascertain the *genuineness* of this Methodist testimony.

The Church History of Dr. Martin Ruter, selected as a representative Methodist historian, was once upon the shelves of my library; but not being deemed of any

special value, it has disappeared. The quotation however, taken at the face, affords no decisive proof; and for purposes of demonstration, possesses no more value than many other passages, which, in the form of testimony, parade the pages of "review."

The opinion of the venerable John Wesley,\* contained in a very brief testimony, is confidently adduced as constituting a valuable concession.

In Romans, Wesley notes on "buried with Him by baptism:" "alluding to the ancient manner of immersion." If the student of Wesley's "Notes" will consult his own explanation, of the exposition, he will find indebtedness acknowledged to Heylyn, Guyse, and other writers; and especially to Bengelius' *Gnomon novi Testamenti*: "Many of his excellent notes I have therefore translated; many more I have abridged."

The "notes" therefore, reflect and reproduce the opinions of Bengelius and other expositors, who, according to the methods of exposition current at the time, were in their turn influenced by the writings of the Fathers.

\* John Wesley, when first leaving Oxford University, was a firm, and perhaps bigoted, adherent of the Anglican Church, and in religious service, an extreme ritualist. Believing that the Rubric of the Church of England favored immersion, he attempted, in two or three cases, to enforce his views. It would be just as unfair, however to the Apostle St. Paul, and to the Reformer Martin Luther, to adduce facts, antecedent to the great change by which their lives were revolutionized, and that which constitutes the pivot fact of their history, in proof of their opinion upon questions of theology and of worship, as to fall back upon the early hereditary views of the Evangelist, John Wesley, instead of his later standard publications,—as evidence of modified and matured judgment in matters of faith and practice. "Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ," might have been the inspired motto of his life, "let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward the God of doctrines of baptism," etc.

In the published "works," of John Wesley, we have not only brief and incidental allusion, as in the note upon Romans, from which so much capital has been made, but we have a *Treatise* on the special subject of Baptism. It is published over his own name and bound up with his works. It was, as far as I know, his latest utterance upon the subject; and may therefore be accepted as the embodiment of his deliberate opinion.

In the interpretation of apparently conflicting opinions of standard writers: it will always be found that a sound and safe canon of interpretation is to explain incidental allusion and occasional expression by the clearer enunciation of full and formulated belief.

No one who quotes Wesley on *Mode*, and desires honestly and fairly to represent his views, can consistently stop short of the "Treatise on Baptism."

Having consulted the note on Romans, in which there is supposed to be allusion to ancient immersion, in continuation of previous exposition, we now turn to the "Treatise" for an elaborate statement of Wesley's own opinion—when directed to the special subject of Baptism:

"As nothing can be determined from Scripture precept or example, so neither from the force or meaning of the word. For the words *baptize* and *baptism* do not necessarily imply dipping, but are used in other senses in several places. Thus we find that the Jews were all baptized in the cloud and in the sea (1 Cor. x., 2); but they were not plunged in either. Christ said to two of his disciples, 'Ye shall be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with.' (Mark x., 38); but neither he nor they were dipped, but only sprinkled and washed



with their own blood. Again we read (Mark vii., 4) of the baptisms of pots and cups, and tables or beds. Now, pots and cups are not necessarily dipped when they are washed—the Pharisees washed the outside of them only. And, as for tables or beds, none could suppose that they could be dipped. Here, then, the word *baptism*, in its natural sense, is not taken for dipping, but for washing or cleansing. And, that this is the true meaning of the word *baptize* is testified by the greatest scholars and most proper judges on the matter. It is true we read of being ‘buried with Christ in baptism.’ But nothing can be inferred from such a figurative expression. Nay, it held exactly, it would make as much for sprinkling as for plunging; since, in burying, the body is not plunged through the substance of the earth, but rather, earth is sprinkled upon it.”—*Treatise on Baptism*.

The only remaining Wesleyan witness, brought upon the stand to testify, in favor of immersion, is Dr. Adam Clarke: announced, with considerable flourish, as “Standard Commentator.” To some Methodist scholars that item of information will be new. The noble commentary of Dr. Adam Clarke contains a valuable compendium of scriptural truth; but it is marked by some grave defects, and on this account has never been, and can never be, accepted by the Methodist Church as “Standard Commentary.” Amongst a few unfortunate passages are two or three allusions to baptism—which, like those of Wesley, in the same connection, reflect the vagaries of earlier writers.

But the most emphatic and distinctive of Dr. Clarke’s opinions, on mode in baptism, are decisively in favour of *affusion*; and the suppression of such deliberate and thoroughly formulative view, after the introduction

of the venerable commentator as a "witness," carries with it the forfeiture of all claim to trustworthiness in the matter of quotation.

We should like, before the learned expositor leaves the stand, to apply a slight pressure in the shape of cross-examination :

Is it your opinion, Dr. Clarke, that, in this passage of the Epistle to the Romans, "buried with Him by baptism," and in the corresponding one of Colossians, including all similar expressions, there is allusion to immersion? "I say it is *probable*," answers the Doctor, "that the apostle alludes to the mode of immersion."

What are we to understand, then, Dr. Clarke, to be the chief ground for accepting the supposition of probable immersion? "That he does so, as some *imagine*."

But, Dr. Clarke, the *probable* affords, at least, very slender foundation for the suggestion of immersion; and, if the *probability* merely rests upon the *certainly* of some people's *imagination*, we cannot accept the statement as valid testimony: Can you not, from ample and accurate stores of biblical and theological knowledge, indicate the certain teaching of God's word upon this subject? "In the next verse," replies the commentator, in a passage of great emphasis, "our being incorporated into Christ by *baptism* is also denoted by our being planted, or, rather, *grafted together in the likeness of his death*; and Noah's Ark *floating upon the water*, and *sprinkled by the rain from heaven*, is a *figure* corresponding to *baptism*."

That will do Doctor: argument and exegesis are more satisfactory than *probability and imagination*.

As these Wesleyan "witnesses" were brought upon

the stand to testify in favor of *immersion*, the result of brief cross-examination has been eminently satisfactory.

#### VII. SYLLOGISM AND HYPOTHESIS.

"The syllogism consists of propositions; propositions of *words*, and words are the tokens and signs of notions. Now, if the very notions of the mind be improperly and overhastily abstracted from facts, vague and not sufficiently definite, *faulty*, in short, in many ways, *the whole edifice tumbles*."—*Lord Bacon*.

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"To say that some of these *washings* (immersions) (P) were performed by sprinkling, is absurd. Let us try this reasoning by the test of logic:

"Immersion is a washing, sprinkling is a washing, *ergo*, immersion is sprinkling;

"Man is an animal, a goose is an animal, *ergo*, a man is a goose."

A very prominent place has been assigned by the reviewer to syllogistic demonstration. The same propositions, or other syllogisms similar in shape and sound to these, were, at the recent baptismal discussions, thick and "plentiful as blackberries." The validity and conclusiveness of such reasoning does not depend merely, as seems to be *imagined*, upon correctness of structure. *The premises must be also sound*. A more perfectly constructed syllogism never, perhaps, emanated from the schoolmen, in their palmiest period, than that which, like a polished glittering shaft, aimed at the very vitals of Christianity, was impelled with dexterous force by the philosophic David Hume.

Nothing that is contrary to experience can be established by testimony:

But every miracle is contrary to experience;

Therefore, no miracle can be established by testimony.

The vitiating fallacy, lurking in the middle term of Hume's famous proposition, was not at once apparent. To some minds the perplexity, produced by this mode of reasoning, was excessively bewildering. Even to trained and practised logicians and apologists, it was not an easy matter to detect and to demonstrate the subtle error. The proposition was perfect in form; and *granting the truth of the premises*, the case was *proven*. It was soon discovered, however, that Hume's Syllogism was *at fault*. The miracles of Christianity were not *false*—as had been demonstrated.

It would not be difficult, by a method of reasoning, far inferior to that of the incisive and accomplished Edinburgh sceptic, and by syllogisms, in which the fallacy is vastly less insidiously concealed, to arrive at some rare conclusions. The reviewer—unless, in the sheets of syllogistic demonstrations, which, by some erratic gust, have been wafted into my sanctum, the type has been playing mischievous and mysterious pranks—reaches by clear sequence the resultant: "Man is a goose." Hypothesis in logic, such as that indulged in, in the review, may be pardonable and permissible to a certain point; but there is only a step from the sublime to the ridiculous. Dr. Joseph Cook, in his eloquent and noble "Boston Monday Lectures," culls, from DeMorgan's logic, an apposite illustrative incident: A cooked stork, *minus* one leg, which, for the gratification of his sweetheart, the servant had cut off, was placed, in that mutilated form, upon a nobleman's table. The explanation offered was that "a stork has only *one* leg." "See,"—said the nobleman next day, taking the servant out to the castle grounds, with a shout "off and away," accompanied by a frightening gesture, to the storks which

after their manner, had been standing moodily upon one leg,—“each stork is running away upon two legs.” But, said the servant, in persistent hypothesis, you did not say to the *baked* stork, “off and away.”

The “review”—an ambitious aspirant to the dignities and distinctions of logic, and the gravity of syllogism in one of its most pretentious pages of formal hypothesis, and, in parade of proposition, which cannot claim recognition even for ingenuity of structure, *descends* and degenerates into a very burlesque of logical reasoning; and, as a last evasive resource, seeks to save itself, and a cause which, as the result of such treatment, must inevitably suffer, by a contemptible “goose” *syllogism*: about equivalent to the stork hypothesis—“off and away!”

“Compress the sum into its solid worth,  
And if it weigh the importance of a fly,  
The scales are false, or algebra a lie.”—*Cowper*.

#### IX. BAPTISMATA BIBLIA: CANNOT BE REVERSED.

“*The doctrine of baptisms.*”—*St. Paul*.

“*Now I praise you, brethren that ye—keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.*”—*St. Paul*.

“The Spirit  
Poured first on His Apostles, whom He sends  
To evangelize the nations, then on all  
Baptized, &c.”—*Milton*.

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The animus and tendency of many a review passage becomes apparent in a fly-sheet clause:—a part it may be presumed of the “review” effort—“not sparsely sprinkled: not lightly poured.”

The expression just quoted cannot refer to *quantity*. That question has not been raised: An ocean of water for spiritual cleansing would not possess more of efficacy

than a mere "drop in the bucket." The subject in contention, and that which must be faced in the front, is that of *mode*. The imputation *sparsely sprinkled* bears only upon the insufficiency of baptism by *effusion*. But have not sprinkling and pouring been hallowed and consecrated by ancient ordinance and ineffable inspiration? "Behold" said Balaam, the son of Beor to Balak the Moabish Chieftain, when summoned to curse Israel, "I have received commandment to bless: and *He hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it.*" "Sparsely sprinkled!" An insufficient rite? Is that an inference warranted by the promise: "I will *sprinkle* clean water upon you and ye shall be clean?" An insufficient application? Does that idea essentially attach to "the blood of *sprinkling*?" Are not the redeemed, the white robed, radiant throng, through the efficacy and "*sprinkling* of the blood of Jesus Christ," forever faultless before the throne of God—faultless even in the presence of that pure searching light which flashes and "flames with the glory of God?"

Lightly poured! was the *pouring* out of the Holy Ghost a baptism, then, after all! There must be some mistake surely? Unwilling to be any party to wilful misrepresentation, to inflict injustice by twist and torture of speech, we quote the exact interrogation: "Was not the *Baptism* of the Holy Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, communicated by pouring?" Yes, that is the question. The terms of inquiry are explicit. The subject admits of an answer clear, straightforward, honest as the light and distinct as the grand historic fact to which it appeals. "True!" What is true? We are not to understand that "the baptism of the Holy Spirit" was "by *pouring*?" Yes, *true!* "The Holy Spirit

came from above"—*came from above !* "The descent of the Spirit" amounted according to the reviewer, to "a figurative immersion." Then the baptism of Pentecost was after all only *figurative*. The most magnificent *fact* of the christian church, constituting the glorious inaugural of this dispensation, to meet the necessities of external rite, dwindles down, under the management and manipulation of this latest exponent and defender of immersionists tenets, into a mere *figure* of speech ! To designate that *pouring* out an immersion is to exhibit an almost unparalleled example of *flat contradiction* in terms. Were the persons baptized plunged into that with which they were baptized ? or was the mode indicated : that of application of the baptismal element or substance ? The admission explicitly answers : "*communicated by pouring.*" The only explanation is that He "came from above." "True." But why was that "descent"—that "*communicated by pouring*"—*designed a baptism ?* Does it not forever, by unexceptionable fact, and by admission of which there has been no unfair advantage taken, determine the modal sense of the New Testament Greek verb *baptizo* ? The copiousness of pouring does not affect the essential idea ; the abandonment of immersion at this point implies the *surrender*, along the whole line, of *exclusive* claim.

The abandonment of immersion was not, it may be assumed, the intention of this emphatic clause. The contradiction of terms, that pouring because of its copiousness was immersion, may be allowed to pass. It looks very much like a *signal of distress*. The tremendous force of historic fact has been telling severely upon an unsheltered position.

The design of that phrase, *lightly poured*, and its

surroundings, was probably intended to convey the idea of insufficiency and of insignificance. But then, over against that phrase, we have the weighty fact: *pouring*, through all the Scriptures, carries the idea of completeness, of sufficiency, of abundance—hence the fitness of its appropriation. This view of the subject has been well brought out by Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, the popular Baptist preacher, in an eloquent passage: “My heart exults, and my eyes flash with the thought, that very likely I shall live to see the *outpouring* of the Spirit; when “the sons and daughters” of God again “shall prophecy,” and “the young men shall see visions and the old men shall dream dreams.” Perhaps there will be no miraculous gifts, for they will not be required: but yet there shall be such a miraculous amount of holiness, such an extraordinary fervor of prayer, such a real communion with God, and so much vital religion, and such a spread of the doctrines of the cross, that every one will see that verily *the Spirit is poured out like water, and the rains are descending from above.*”

#### IX. PHILIP AND THE EUNUCH.

“The Ethiopian was reading that description of the Messiah which promises, so shall He *sprinkle* many nations: a promise verified by the command, ‘Go baptize all nations.’ We fling in to the immersionist his preposition, and give him his strongest ground, and what can he make of it?”—*Dr. Whedon.*

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“The baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch next demands attention. Thinking that the *sprinkling* theory will suit better here, our author discards pouring for the present, and accepts sprinkling, because in the neighborhood of where the eunuch was reading, when Philip came to him, he finds the word *sprinkle*. He quotes a sentence from Isaiah lii; “so shall He sprinkle many nations,” and says: “*This*, it will be remembered, was part of the passage which the Ethiopian eunuch



was reading when . . . he was joined by the evangelist Philip," &c., p. 18. From this he draws the *inference* that Philip *sprinkled* rather than baptized him. I am sorry to be compelled to contradict our author so often ; but a defence of the truth demands it, and " we are set for the defence of the gospel."

An attempt is made to establish a difference between *pouring* and *sprinkling* : the one discarded and the other accepted.

But while quibbling at the use of the *two* words, expressive of one mode, alternately applied by the Holy Spirit to baptismal administration, and equally applicable to *affusion* : the reviewer, in discussing *en hudati*, by a strange inconsistency, solemnly assures us that " Baptizein, both in sacred and profane authors, signifies to *dip*, to *plunge*, to *immerse*"—*three* modes : a student *dips* into Shakespeare, a dagger is *plunged* in the breast, and a boat is *immersed*, *sunk*, in the river, and left there ; but these modes do not generally or collectively make a baptism in a sacred sense.

The difference between pouring and sprinkling, in *baptism*, admits of no *essential* distinction : The Holy Spirit is promised as the rain : Sometimes the rain pours and sometimes it sprinkles ; but *it is the same rain*. Sprinkling is only moderate pouring. The two methods are one in the common action of applying *the element to the candidate* ; and they alike fitly signify the saving sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit.

Immersion on the other hand, by a fundamentally changed condition, unauthorised by scriptural fact or phrase, without warrant of inspired imagery or instituted ordinance, violently *applies the candidate to the element*. Mode in baptism, in order that the visible symbol may correspond with the fact signified, should represent a three-

fold idea : Origen, " I will pour ;" subject, " be baptized every one of you ;" transmission, " ye shall *receive* the Holy Ghost." " Pouring alone," says Dr. Whedon, " or sprinkling, expresses these three, and is therefore the only adequate symbol. *Immersion gives not God the glory ; nothing comes from above, all comes to the candidate horizontally, and nothing vertically ; all from man, and nothing from heaven.* It expresses one's *own* moral reformation, but not God's regeneration. It looks the very child of Pharasaism. It represents only *effects*, and atheistically acknowledges no cause.

According to Baptisma, there was substantial reason for believing that Philip *sprinkled* the Ethiopian ; and one part of the argument was that, at the time, the Eunuch was reading the grand Messianic prediction : "*So shall he sprinkle many nations.*"

Though " sorry to contradict " Baptisma, yet the reviewer is " set for the defence of the Gospel ;" and truth demands the *contradiction*. The soundness of the argument, or the accuracy of the inference, is challenged on several grounds :

1. " Let the reader turn to Acts 8 : 32, 33, and he will see the part of the passage that the Ethiopian Eunuch was reading ; the place of the Scriptures, &c. The objection is accompanied by an extraordinary admission : " that *the chapters are not properly divided*, and that the latter part of the fifty-second of Isaiah belongs more properly to the fifty-third."

Does the reviewer forget that instead of a neatly bound volume, such as might come from Bagster's establishment, the princely African, riding in a chariot, must have been reading from a roll of parchment—or more

likely of rough skins? \* Does he know that the most valued and most venerable manuscripts are written in Uncial character, without stop, accent, or aspiration, and even without spaces for division of words? Has he never in College, or Museum Library, examined Hebrew or Greek specimens of ancient manuscripts? Does he understand that the comparatively modern system of chapters and verses was entirely unknown to the ancients; and that any manuscript of the sacred writings with a division into chapters, by the original hand, must be, at least, as late as the 12th century?

If he does possess such information, the objection, based upon the two chapters, presumes upon the *ignorance* of his readers; and if, on the other hand, the range of acquaintance with the general literature of the subject, be of the most meagre character, the time occupied by "review," might be more profitably employed in a variety of preliminary inquiries. †

2. "Further, and still more unfortunate for our author, the word in the Septuagint, where we have the word sprinkle, is not *rantizo*, but *thaumazo*. On this passage Albert Barnes remarks: 'But Martini, Rosenmüller and Gesenius suppose that it is derived from an Arabic word meaning to leap, to sprinkle.' ‡

\* "The Jews divided the Prophecies into fifty-four sections for public reading."—Whedon.

† The fact here indicated may account for the allusion to third-class Normal certificate. It is a well known law of hydrodynamical science that *water* does not rise above its own level.

‡ The word which occurs in Isa. 53: 15, is *yazze*, the Fut. Hiphil of the verb *Naza*. The Pret. Hiphil, *Hizza* is thus defined by Gesenius:

1. "To cause to leap for joy, to cause to exult, to make rejoice, with accusative, *al*, in or because of anything; Isa. 52: 15, 'So shall He cause many nations to rejoice in Himself.' Septg.

It might be enough to answer that the expositors in question have only afforded expression to one phase of the magnificent idea—in this prophetic passage. The Redeemer, in saving, sanctifying operations, shall *sprinkle* many nations, and as the result, the saved ones shall exult and rejoice, and leap for joy :

“ New songs do now their lips employ,  
And dances their glad heart for joy.”

But this rendering, while indicating results, fails to give prominence to redeeming operations—which are the main theme of this inspiring Messianic prophecy.

From ample knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures, and especially of Evangelical promise and prediction, we may be sure that Phillip would correct the defect of the Septuagint, if that were needed : and that he would bring out the full distinctive meaning of the passage.

According to Barnes, the passage only refers to the fact of the Redeemer's “purifying or cleansing of the nations : and not to the ordinance of christian baptism.” But according to the suggestion of Dr. Adam Clarke and others, yet more positive, it does refer to baptism : The transition, from the *purification* of nations to the baptism of individual believers would be, in thought and phrase, natural, easy and most direct.

The important prediction :—“so shall He sprinkle many nations : the kings shall shut their mouths at

*outo thaumasonta*—Syr. Vulg. Luth. Engl. ‘So shall he sprinkle many nations,’ *i. e.*, My servant, the Messiah, shall make expiation for them ; but this accords less with the parallel verb, *shaman*.

2. To sprinkle *e. g.* water, blood, also oil. Lev. 8 : 11, &c. The primary idea is that of sparkling, flying out.

3. Of liquids, to leap forth, to spout, to spirt, to be sprinkled, &c.”—*Gesenius*.

him"—finds a very striking explanation in Roberts *Oriental Illustrations*:

"At an Eastern feast a person stands near the entrance with a silver vessel, full of rose water, or some other perfumed liquid, with which he sprinkles the guests as they approach—as if from a watering pan. The object is to shew that they are now the king's or the great man's guest—under his favor and protection. So shall the eternal Son of God *sprinkle* many nations; and admit them into his presence in token of their purification and of his protection and favor. The kings of the earth shall no longer rebel against him; but shall shut their mouths to denote submission and respect."

The quotation from Albert Barnes, *in loc.*, affords a striking example and illustration of the gross and grievous injustice which, in the severance of passages from the context, is frequently done to the opinions of eminent writers. They are made to countenance and support a sense and meaning diametrically opposite to that for which the words were originally intended.

The remarks of Gesenius and others, quoted by reviewer—as some of his friends, who had accepted the quotations as *trustworthy*, may be surprised to learn—were introduced, by the commentator, merely to show what had been opposite and alternative view. The refutation which gives *the author's own opinion of the passage has been withheld*.

"It may be *replied*," says Barnes, in reference to these German writers, "that the usual, the *universal* signification of the word *naza*, in the Old Testament is to *sprinkle*. It is properly applicable to the act of sprinkling blood or water and then comes to be used in

the sense of cleansing by the blood that makes expiation for sin, or of *cleansing by water as an emblem of purifying.*" The paraphrase of the eminent Hebrew Scholar, Bishop Lowth also accompanies, and is endorsed by the, exposition :

"So shall He *sprinkle* many nations, &c."

The privilege of spending an evening, socially, with the accomplished commentator, Albert Barnes, and of hearing from his own lips the deeply interesting story of long laborious *life-work*, devoted to the elucidation of scriptural truth, holds a prominent place among treasured reminiscences of privileged intercourse. Could he have been conscious of such injustice to his work, making him explain away the meaning of an important text, the sense and significance of which *he sought to establish*, it would not be difficult to imagine the indignant surprise which must have found expression on his venerable and intelligent face. In additional vindication of the authorized rendering of the passage, in dispute, it may suffice to cite the *Speaker's Commentary*. We have in these noble volumes the results of the best biblical and critical scholarship of the Established church of England.

"The verb *yazze*," according to the speaker's note on the original word, "occurs elsewhere *nineteen* times;\* always in the sense of *sprinkling* with a view to ceremonial purification. It has been urged that the verb has regularly an *accusative* of the liquid which is used in sprinkling, the object sprinkled being preceded by *al*. This, how-

\* The only places in the Old Testament in which the word occurs are Lev. 6 : 27 ; Isa. 63 : 3 ; 2 Kings 9 : 33 ; Lev. 6 : 6, 17 ; 5 : 9 ; 14 : 7, 16, 27, 57 ; 16 : 14, 15, 19 ; Numbers 19 : 4, 18, 19 ; Exod. 29 : 21 ; Numb. 19 : 21 ; 8 : 7 ; Lev. 16 : 14 ; 8 : 11, 30.—In all instances translated to *sprinkle*.—Barnes *in loc*.

ever, is to forget that in the passage before us the verb refers, not to a *literal* process of *sprinkling*, but to an act of purification analogous to that which was effected by ceremonial sprinkling. Hence the Syriac renders it, "shall purify." It is obvious that *rhantizo* was employed by Ac. and Theod. in this *derived* sense with a like change of construction.\*"

The narrative of the Ethiopian Eunuch's baptism does not, it is claimed, admit of application to baptism by pouring—as witnessed by reviewer. Very likely there are *some* points of difference. An intelligent reader would scarcely expect to find any thing like exact resemblance in the minutiae of circumstance. Modern baptismal services, *in the desert*, in which alone the varied conditions could converge and centre, *are extremely rare*.

"There is in the one," contends the reviewer, "*a rantizing* and in the other *cheoing*, but no baptizing. There is no *comparison* whatever, between the *two narratives*."

It may be answered to a passage of confused verbiage, and of mere *rant* in composition, that, in Philip's recent baptism, the Holy Ghost had been *poured* out, and the evangelical promise, *He shall sprinkle many nations*, suggested and determined the mode of the Eunuch's baptism: therefore, the worde *cheo*, "*to pour*," and *rhantizo*, *to sprinkle*, are in exact adaptation to the sacred narrative. *They agree in one*.

"I ask the Greek scholar" continues the reviewer, who thinks "this ought to be conclusive," "who is an advocate of pouring or sprinkling, if he were going to

\* *Asperget—shall sprinkle.—Vulg.*

give an account of a baptism as practised by the Baptists—that account to be written in Greek—whether he would not use these very *identical* words”—of the Eunuch's baptism in the Acts?

The question may be submitted to competent Greek scholars. We make the appeal to men who wrote and spoke the Greek language. They lived to witness, and to speak of, triune immersions and other corruptions of their time:

What say you Cyril of Jerusalem? *Kataducte triton eis to hudor*—"plunge them down," answers the Father, "thrice into the water."

What think you Basil? *En trisi katadusesi*: "By three immersions," thunders Basil the great.

Having sanctioned the later superstitions of baptismal administration, they demanded a new phraseology; and they seem to have had no scruple about rejecting the very identical word of the New Testament—the consecrated, sacramental *baptizo*.

"The terms *kataduo*, *katadusis*," says Dr. Dale, in *Patristic Baptism*, page 584, "are not to be found as words of inspiration descriptive of ritual baptism. The overwhelming inference, therefore, is, that what these terms were introduced to express in patristic baptism, *had no existence in Scripture baptism*."

But, suppose the question were proposed in a modified form:

Would the "very identical" words of the commission, and of the inspired narrative of the Ethiopian's baptism, be apposite and applicable to the administration of baptism by *effusion*?



The verb *baptizo*, would be an essential requisite ; for the water is only the symbol and seal of spiritual baptism—the pouring out of the Holy Ghost ; the *eis* would be demanded ; for the candidates are baptized “ *in* ” the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost ; the correlative preposition *ek*—according to frequent rendering, as when “ He riseth *from, ek, supper* ”—would obtain dual application : the officiating minister, after charge and benediction goes up *from* the communion to continue the service ; and “ amidst cheerful anthems ” that “ fill his house,” *from* the same scene of consecrated interest, the baptized ones, like the Ethiopian convert, go on “ their way rejoicing.”

Administration of baptism by *affusion* is, in spirit and mode, eminently Scriptural and apostolical. Sentiment, syntax, and sacramental scene agree in one.

X. “ *EIS* ” IN GREEK : “ *INTO* ” IN ENGLISH.

“ The authors of these books being Jews, naturally used the Greek particles and prepositions, not only in the variety of their own significations, but in the variety also of the significations of the corresponding Hebrew particles and prepositions.”—*Macknight*.

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“ Our ministers tell us that *into* only means *near to*. Do these same ministers tell their impenitent hearers that *into hell*, in the ninth Psalm, and *into everlasting punishment*, in the twenty-fifth of Matthew, only mean *near to* ? How happy the tidings, and how great the encouragement to go on in sin ! And do your ministers tell their Christian hearers that Christ did not ascend *into* heaven, as the angels told the apostles in Acts, first chapter and eleventh verse,—only *near to*, and that we have no Advocate *in* heaven now ; and also, that although Christ told us that the saved would be received *into* life eternal (Matt. xxv : 46), he only meant that they should get *near to*,—near enough to see its glory, but never be permitted to enter ? You would not believe them if they thus spake ; neither believe them if they tell you that “ *into the water* ”

does not mean *into the water*, for it is the very same word that is here used as is used in the places above referred to—*eis* in Greek, *into* in English."—"Voice of God."

The paragraph *ut supra* has been thus fully reproduced: a specimen of the style adopted by a professed interpreter of "the voice of God." It is doubtful whether in the complete circle of controversial effort, there can be found more striking example of violence to all sound and sober principles of criticism; and it will account for somewhat of severity of stricture in this section, and for attempted closeness and conclusiveness of reply.

When a voice reaches us, in that questionable form, we begin to think at once of credentials, and there is an irresistible temptation to subject the utterance to searching test. We read in John Milton's magnificent Epic, of the marvellous touch of Ithuriel's spear by which the most specious assumptions were instantly detected:—

"Ithuriel with his spear  
Touch'd lightly; for no falsehood can endure  
Touch of celestial temper, but returns  
Of force to its own likeness."

—*Paradise Lost*.

We shall soon find that, beneath the Ithureal touch of inspired and authoritative fact and teaching, assertion and implication take strangely contrary aspects, and widely different forms.

"Our ministers," it is affirmed, "tell us that *into* only means *near to*." Do they? The fact thus implied, in nude form, unsustained by evidence, cannot obtain acceptance. The ministers alluded to, may, in the connection indicated, have interpreted *eis* to eternal salvation and to "everlasting punishment." Do they thus weaken or dilute the

essential truth of God's word? If "their impenitent hearers" be sent *eis, to hell*, they will be for ever beyond the reach of hope; and if "their Christian hearers," through the mercy of God, get, *eis, to heaven*, they will not only be "near enough to see its glory," but

"The beatific sight  
Shall fill heaven's sounding courts with praise,  
And wide diffuse the golden blaze  
Of everlasting light."

"A frivolous remark," says Thorn, "has been made by a reverend brother which shows that the good man has *not* fairly *studied the merits* of this controversy, or had written contrary to his knowledge in order to make *an affecting impression on the minds of his ignorant readers*. He says if *eis* does not signify *into* then entering into heaven is only going to the gate of heaven; and entering into hell is only going to the gate of hell."—British Letters.

"But Pedobaptists never denied that *eis* sometimes signifies *into*. All that they contend for is that the Baptists cannot prove such to be its import in Acts 8: 38, and other passages narrating the act of baptism."—"Neither believe them," is the counsel of reviewer to youthful converts, "if they tell you that *into* the water does not mean *into the water*."

The meaning of the modest and Christian admonition can only be that when ministers in their expositions assert that the Greek preposition *eis*—" *eis* in Greek into in English"—does not mean into the water, in the sense of immersion they are to be seriously regarded as uttering deliberate falsehood.

Before dealing more closely with this question of grammatical *criticism*, on a point which touches the very

existence of the immersionist theory, it may be well to afford the reviewer the opportunity of expounding his views to the fullest possible extent. In addition to the extract from "the voice of God," we give another from "review of baptism" on the Eunuch's baptism:

"Surely these examples from the word of God prove conclusively the fact that *eis*, used in connection with water, means *into* and not *to*. Since *eis* means *into*, as it has been proved, *ek* being the antithesis of *eis*, must mean, as lexicographers say it does *out of*. If *eis* is to be robbed of its true meaning there is some ground for the Dutchman's mingled feeling of joy and sorrow:—joy at the thought that "*into* everlasting punishment, *eis kolasin aionion*," Matt xxv: 46, and "*into* hell, *into* the fire that never shall be quenched—*eis ten geennan*; *eis to pur to asbeston*," Mark ix: 43, does not mean *into*, but *near by*, "just close enough to be warm and comfortable:"—but sorrow at the thought that "*into* life eternal, *eis zoen aionion*," Matt. xxv: 46, does not mean *into*, but *near by*; but close enough to see its glory, but never be permitted to enter there. Again, if *eis* is to be robbed of its true meaning, why should the infidel be asked to believe that "Daniel was cast *into* the lion's den" and protected by God, or that the three Hebrews were "cast *into* the fiery furnace" and not even scorched; and were not cast *into* those places, only *near by*. Alas for the theory that needs such support!

Let not the quibbles of small minds throw a stigma on the character of a whole denomination, and on the character of candid men of other denominations who are honest enough to admit a thing that is beyond doubt. Such men are Calvin, Doddridge, Adam Clarke, &c."

The impression produced, by this statement in question upon any inquirer, approaching the subject for the first time, would be that *eis* has no equivalent, and that it could not be honestly rendered except by *into*.

The intelligent student guided, perhaps, by the reference supplied, "Hand Book to the Grammar of the Greek Testament," would find that the preposition like other words is amenable to grammatical law; and he would be amazed to find, *in*

*the authority offered for his guidance, an admirable statement of the law which governs the subject :*

“In explanation of *the various significance*, which may belong to the same preposition, two points should be noted :—

1. That its meaning will be necessarily *modified* by signification of the *verb* that it may follow, and by that of the *noun* which it governs, as also by the *case* of the latter.

2. That as all languages have a far smaller number of words than there are shades of thought to express, one word must often have *many* applications.—p 143.

The philosophy of Grammar having been utterly ignored: How stands the question of fact ?

“We find” says the learned and laborious English writer, Thorn, “from a careful investigation of the point in dispute that in our version of the New Testament the translators have rendered *apo* by *from*—three hundred and seventy-four times ; *eis* by *to* or *unto*—five hundred and thirty times ; *ek* by *from*—one hundred and eighty six times ; *en* by *at*, *in* or *with*—three hundred and thirteen times.”

A very important fact of New Testament construction, not to be classed with “the quibbles of small minds” has been pointed out by Prof. Stewart. In Greek classics the verb baptizo is followed by the preposition *eis*, or its equivalent and the *accusative* case of the element. The method of New Testament construction is different. With only one single exception, and that admits of easy explanation, the element is either put in the nude dative, as in Luke, or in the dative with

the preposition *en*, *en hudati*, as in the Gospel of St. Matthew."

The inquiry at this point, however, has specific reference to "*eis* in Greek: *into* in English."

In seeking a searching and decisive test, we shall take different classes of texts:—

1. The use of *eis* in "various significance:" St. Matthew, chap. 5, 1, employs the preposition: "He went up into, *eis*, a mountain,"—chap. 22, 3, "Call them that were bidden to, *eis*, the wedding." St. Mark, describing the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, chapter 11, 8, says: "Many spread their garments in *eis*, the way"—warning the disciples, chap. 13, 14, writes—"flee to, *eis*, the mountains."

"Jesus went away again beyond Jordan, *into* (*eis*) the place where John at first baptized, and there abode." John x. 40. If *into*, at or beyond Jordan, meant *under* water: that for a considerable time was the place of the Saviour's abode.

When Peter and John "ran both together," towards the sepulchre, "the other disciple did outrun Peter and came first to (*eis*) the sepulchre;" and yet it is said expressly: "yet went he *not in*."—John 20: iv. 5. The meaning of *eis* is clear; they went *to* the sepulchre.

We find also in the Acts of the Apostles: chap. 16, 16, "We went to, *eis*, prayer"—chap. xxvi. 14, in the narrative of Saul's conversion, "We were also fallen to, *eis*, the earth. In the Septuagint, 2 Kings, ii. 6, we read: "The Lord hath sent me into, *eis*, the Jordan." "They came," says the sacred historian, "unto, *eis*, the Jordan." The *eis* brought them to the banks, but not into the river

of Jordan. Elisha and the sons of the prophets surely did not go into the rushing waters to fell trees.

2. A selection of passages in which the *eis* has special reference to water; but in which it does not, and cannot, mean "into water."

In the case of the tribute money the Saviour said to Simon Peter, Matthew xvii: 27, "Go thou to, *eis*, the sea, and cast an hook, &c." Surely the disciple was only to stand upon the beach, and not to plunge into water.

St. Luke, in *describing* the Galilean tempest, Chap. viii: 23 says, "and there came down a storm of wind on *eis*, the lake." Did the hurricane strike the surface of the water or was it buried beneath the whelming wave?

Again St. John, chap xxi: 4, speaks of the risen Saviour: Jesus stood on, *eis*, the shore." In the grey dawn of that memorable morning the Lord awaited the disciples as they brought their boat to land: He was near to the blue rolling wave of deep Gallilee, but the *eis* could *not* take him "into water."

3. A comparison of passages, of still greater significance, in which *eis* is used in immediate connection with baptism:

In Acts chap. xix: 3, St. Paul asked the Ephesian disciples: "Unto, *eis*, what," then were ye baptized?

Had they understood the preposition to mean "into water" in the rigid emphatic sense which modern immersion demands, thinking only of mode, they would have answered at the Jordan or, as the case might be, the sea of Tiberias; they said "unto, *eis*, John's baptism." Was it *baptism into a baptism*?

It is affirmed of the Israelites, 1 Cor. x. 2, that in passing through the Red Sea, "they were all baptized

unto, *eis*, Moses." Was the *eis* into Moses; millions of people immersed into one man? *Ad absurdum*.

Another very important passage of the same class, in which we test the value of the quotation made, and the trustworthiness of its source, we have in the Commission; Matthew xxviii: 19. "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, &c."\*

It is baptizing them into, *eis*, the name of the sacred Trinity. It is not mark you *eis hudor*, that would be baptism *into water*, and would exactly answer the exigencies of *immersion*. But the *eis* does not take us "into water." The verb instead of expending its force upon mere *mode*, lifts us up to a loftier plane of thought and sacred service. The commission authorizes the administration of baptism into the name; *eis to onoma*—all that the divine name represents.

4. Passages where, in the construction, the preposition is connected with an active verb.

In the Book of Revelations xiii: 13, we read of the wonders of the beast: "he maketh fire to come down from heaven on, *eis*, the earth." The preposition here, as in the Acts of the Apostles, to which so much importance is attached, by advocates of immersion, is connected with an active verb. In Acts it is said that Philip and the Eunuch "went down into, *eis*, the water;" and in the Apocalypse, it is said that the beast made fire to "come down from heaven on, *eis*, the earth,"—*to*, not *into* in the sense of underneath,—"*to* the earth." If rendering "*to* the earth" be good sense and sound syntax for the Greek of St. John in Revelation: then must "*to* the water" be an adequate rendering for the Greek St. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles.

\* *Baptizontes autous eis to onoma tou patros, &c.*



There is also the remarkable record in 1 Kings, chapter 1, which when compared with the Septuagint version, goes to prove that the *eis* is perfectly compatible with *pouring*: "Cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon."\* "And the Cherithites and the Pelethites, went down and caused Solomon to ride upon king David's mule, and brought him to *eis* Gihon, and Zadok the priest took a horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed, *echrise*, Solomon.'

They went down to Gihon—to the Kedron or, with greater probability, to the gentle waters of Siloam :

"Siloa's brook that flow'd  
Fast by the oracle of God."

We have the *eis*—they went down to Gihon; we have structural expression, *echrisan auton*, corresponding with *ebaptisen auton* of the Acts; we have waters flowing softly, "cool Siloam's shady rill;" we have the pouring, from the tabernacle horn, of consecrating oil; but *we have no immersion*. The *eis* does not mean, and cannot make "into water." They went down to Gihon, as in a western city they might have gone into spacious square or park—its smooth slopes afforded convenience for crowd and ceremony.

There are in this narrative of the Hebrew Coronation, the *eis* and the *auton*, and the *pouring* of oil, and the still waters of Gihon; but *there is no immersion*..

What then becomes of the vaunted argument: based upon "*eis* in Greek, into in English?" It shrivels beneath the slightest pressure. Compared with the texture of such a passage, in firmness and fibre:

"The spider's most attenuated thread  
Is cord, is *cable*."

\* *Kai katayeta auton eis ten gion.*

The flimsiness of the quotation, which has led to this discussion of the Greek preposition, does not, however, save it from *indictment* in the name of the commonwealth of Israel. It cannot, even by its insignificance, escape from the charge of offensiveness and of flagrant violation of the nobler courtesies of christian life.

The ministers in question may have been the means of leading you to the cross and to the Saviour, and the seals of their ministry may ye be, in the Lord, *but do not believe them !*

They may have spent early years in acquiring disciplined culture, and they may be *Scholars* in the truest sense; *but do not believe them !*

They may be independent inquirers, not satisfied to take their facts and criticism *on credit*; *but do not believe them !*

They may be men who, having some respect for scholarly reputation, hold themselves amenable to established canons of inquiry; *but do not believe them !*

They would not, these ministers of yours, be capable of petty impertinence, the genuine mark of "small minds;" *but do not believe them !*

The charge, tremendously serious, as at first sight it seems, not having in its support the warrant of sound criticism, and of sober scriptural teaching, dissolves—with the first Ithuriel touch of inspired truth. We are conscious, when first confronted with the stupendous implication of palpitating pain; but, when scrutinized, the disturbing element passes lightly away—*like the thistle down which floats upon the soft breeze of a sunny summer day.*

## X. THE PHILIPPIAN JAILOR'S BAPTISM.

"It is therefore pretty evident that we have, in this chapter, very presumptive proof: That *Baptism* was administered without *immersion*, as in the case of the Jailor and his family."—*Dr. Adam Clarke*.

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"Let the reader turn to Acts xvi:25-34; from verse 29 we read: Then he (the jailor) called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out and said, &c. Reader, where do you suppose the preachers and the audience are now? You read above that the jailor brought them out of their cell, and now they are speaking to him, and to all that are in his house. From these facts the natural reply to the question would be, that they are *all* in the jailor's house. Then we read that, after the word of the Lord was spoken to him and to all that were in his house, he *took them*. If baptism was performed by sprinkling or pouring in this case; why take them anywhere away from the place of preaching?"

The narrative of the jailor's Baptism, at Philippi, to which the reviewer asks us to turn, is very explicit. There were the "inner prison"—where Paul and Silas, all lacerated and bleeding, had been thrust into the stocks—the outer prison, and the jailor's house, all doubtless within one enclosure. The jailor, when first aroused, "brought them out" from that deeper dungeon to the common prison. To some spacious spot of the outer prison the members of the jailor's household, excited by the earthquake, probably hurriedly gathered. In that part of the prison the word of the Lord was spoken, baptism administered, and afterwards he "brought them into his house." There was confessedly no opportunity, in immediate connection with the service, for immersion. The phrase, therefore, "he took them," which explains itself to mean: "he took them and washed their stripes," has been, by a most unwar-

arrantable method of exposition, wrung and wrenched from its plain, common sense narrative of the jailor's humane act; and twisted and tortured into affirmation of immersion. "They were taken," says reviewer, "either to tank or river." Had immersion been necessary, we should doubtless have found some such assertion in the inspired record; but, as there is no trace of such a fact, we have good reason for believing that *there was no immersion*. Even in the civilization of the British empire, the reviewer, to this day, would find some difficulty in administering baptism by immersion to prisoners in any common jail. To affirm the existence of such a convenience in a Roman jail, in that "northern latitude of snowy Thrace," at the beginning of the Christian Era, argues a slight knowledge of the annals of prisons, and of prison life; and carries us, by a single step, into the region of sheer absurdity.

But then there was "the river that washed its walls;" and the jailor and his household must have been immersed at the Strymon. It is not said, mark you, that St. Paul *took* the jailor "and all his" to any river; only that the jailor took Paul and Silas "and washed their stripes." The narrative flatly forbids the inference which the reviewer finds necessary for immersion. "They have beaten us openly" said Paul, when next day, the magistrates ordered their release, "and have cast us into prison; and do they now thrust us out privately? Nay verily but let them come themselves and fetch us out." The jailor could not, without breach of fidelity and forfeiture of life, have taken Paul and Silas beyond the precincts of the prison. The noble protest of the apostle if, in search of deep water for immersion

he had been privily prowling through city and suburb, would have been little to his credit.

Evidence, inference, and inspired record are all in direct opposition to the theory of immersion. "If baptism," says the reviewer, "was performed by pouring and sprinkling; why take them any where away from the place of preaching?" We cannot find from the account of St. Luke that the jailor *took* them anywhere except from the inner prison, and after baptism to his own house. As in all other New Testament cases there was baptism, *but no immersion*.

#### XI. JOHN THE BAPTIST AND THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

"Every later appearance in the Church must be judged by the model of Apostolic teaching and practice."—*Dr. I. H. Kurtz*.

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"Who were the *Original* members of the first New Testament Church?"

"They were those who had believed in Jesus, and were baptized from the time that John commenced his ministry."\*

The apparent drift and design of that review statement are, to claim recognition for the baptism and disciples of John as a constituent of the first christian church. The mention of John's baptism, in the connection indicated by reference passages, had exclusive application to the competence of an apostolic candidate. The very phrase *John's baptism*, separates it from Christianity. We do not, and the sacred writers do not, speak of Paul's baptism, of Peter's baptism, of Philip's baptism. Whether of Paul or Cephas, or James, the administration was in the divine name, and was therefore Christian baptism.

\* "Voice of God."—*Pastor D. G. McDonald*.

John the Baptist, as the harbinger of the Messiah, and nearer to the rising Sun of Righteousness, was greater than all that preceded him—who could only gaze through the dimness of ages. But the *least* of the *disciples* of Christ, favored with noon-tide radiance of gospel day, is *greater* than he.

There is no haze, however, and nothing of mystery, or of murkiness, deepening and darkening around the subject. It is clear and transparent as a sunbeam; and woe unto them that put darkness for light.

The Acts of the Apostles dates from the Great Commission. That inspired book contains the history of the first New Testament Church. After the ascension the disciples waited in prayer and supplication until the promised baptism of the Holy Ghost was fulfilled. "*The number of the names together,*" says the sacred writer, including both men and women, "*was about one hundred and twenty.*"

These one hundred and twenty disciples, "baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire," to whom three thousand converts were added on the day of Pentecost, to which additions of believers were added *daily*, became the nucleus of organized Apostolic Churches which, beginning at Jerusalem, in accession and enlargement, extended "into all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth."

## XII. THE COMMISSION.

"In the corresponding passage of *Mark* it is "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." The only difference is that in this passage the *sphere*, in its world-wide compass and universality of *objects*, is more fully and definitely expressed; while in the former the great *aim* and certain *result* are delightfully expressed in the command *to make disciples of all nations.*—*Dr. David Brown.*

"Every body knows," says reviewer in expounding the commission,\* "that the word baptize is not translated only transferred into the text."

"All that the English learner has to do is to find out the meaning of the Greek word our Saviour used in the Commission, &c."

In a chapter on Dr. Dale the reviewer gives the primary meaning of *baptizo* from Liddell and Scott, and others, making no mention of their definition of the New Testament *baptizo*, and as the secondary meaning:

*"Condition ; the result of complete influence effected by any possible means, and in any conceivable way."*

That secondary definition, contradictory, as it is, to much of strenuous contention in the same book for rigid literalism, marks a point of interpretation far in advance of the rank and file of immersionist polemics: "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

The secondary definition, which the reviewer gives of *baptizo*, according to the analogy of the New Testament usage, determines the sense of the Greek verb in the commission.

The apostles were not permitted to act under their commission until *after* they had received ample *interpretation*. They were to wait at Jerusalem, and "not many days hence," God would explain the baptism. The Spirit was *poured* out on the day of Pentecost.

A few days after the commission had been received, the likeness as of fire streamed down upon each radiant brow. The descent both symbolical and real was by

\* "Bible Baptisma and its Qualifications by D. G. McDonald, Pastor of the Baptist Church, Charlottetown."

*pouring.* That was *God's baptism.* That was the Saviour's *own* explanation of baptism in the commission. That was the sense in which the disciples, in the fullness of their illumination, comprehended the Saviour's teaching: "On the Gentiles also," in additional explanation, was *poured out* the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts x. 45. "And as I began to speak the Holy Ghost fell on them as upon us at the beginning.

"Then remembered I the words of *the Lord Jesus*, how that He said John indeed *baptized with water*; but *ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.*" Acts xi. 15, 16.

This baptism of the Spirit was by *pouring*.

The baptism of fire was the application of the baptismal symbol to the head.

The "one baptism" of Ephesians, and the buried with Him by baptism," of the Romans, were baptisms of the Holy Ghost, spiritual processes; and no baptism of the Holy Ghost has ever been represented except by *affusion*. The New Testament explains itself.

"*The Bible is its own dictionary: the Spirit of God His own interpreter.*" \*

#### XIII. THE SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH: BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

"A little drop of water may serve to seal the fulness of divine grace in baptizing as well as a small peace of bread and the least tasting of wine in the Holy Supper.—*Witsins.*

An opinion was expressed in "Baptisma" that "by means of a parallel between Baptism and the Lord's Supper "the agitation to which the Churches have been

\* Dr. Whedon.—The teaching of Christ in the Commission has been discussed in a former chapter: *vid.* page 69.



subjected upon the vexed but comparatively insignificant question of mode" might "be made to stand out in its true light"—"that upon the basis of such parallel" it would not be difficult "to construct a conclusive *reductio ad absurdum* argument."

"I am perfectly astonished," writes the reviewer, in his chapter: "arguments from the Lord's Supper demolished," at the other part of our author's quotation, that in order to observe the ordinance literally as it was instituted, the Lord's Supper ought to be celebrated as a grand festal entertainment."

I am not quite clear whether the misrepresentation of that passage, of sense and scope, purpose and import, was intentional and deliberate: It may be that owing to defective mental perception, the statement in condensed form was not clearly comprehended. In the interests of charity I incline to the latter alternative.

A large part of the structure of immersion has been based on the rigid literal interpretation of the verb *baptizo*. The contention is that Greek words have been employed very generally, by New Testament writers, in a new sense; and the presumption is warranted that baptism is not an exception.

The inquiry very naturally turns in the direction of the other sacrament. The consecrated name of the sacrament of the broken body and shed blood is *deipnon*—the *Lord's Supper*.

Is *deipnon* by inspired writers employed with the same signification as by the classic writers of Greece? The definitions of two lexicons, which happen to be at hand, may be appended:

*Deipnon*, "a meal or meal time"—the *chief meal* answering to our *dinner*."—*Liddell and Scott*.

*Deipnon*, "in Homer, breakfast; in Attic writers and in N. T. dinner or supper, i. e. the chief meal of the Jews, and also of the Greeks and Romans, taken towards or at evening, and often prolonged into the night—hence a banquet, feast, &c."—*Robinson*.

Then to observe the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and to administer it according to the classic use, and primary signification, of the original word, strenuously contended for in baptism, would require "a grand festal entertainment."

Such a celebration would be, of course, a violent perversion of the sacred ordinance and a direct contravention of christianity, reason, and common sense. Therefore we are compelled to the *rejection* of the principle of interpretation which presses this *absurd* demand. But if the law of literal interpretation must be abandoned in *deipnon*: why not in *baptism*?

"The simple suggestion," to reproduce the closing lines of the original paragraph, which has "perfectly astonished" the writer of "Review," as well it might, when violently wrested from its original sense, and plain signification, "in the direction of *consistency* in dealing with the two sacraments of the Church, and of making the same law of interpretation sweep the whole circle, shews sufficiently the *supreme folly* of attempting to build up a lofty fabric upon so slight a foundation.

#### XIV. BAPTISMAL REGENERATION.

It is well known that from a very early period the most extravagant notions prevailed in the church with respect to the *efficacy* of baptism.—In proportion as genuine devotion declined, the love of pomp and ceremony increased.—*Robert Hall*.

Having been called upon to administer baptism to an adult, under circumstances of severe illness, such as to preclude possibility of immersion, the very natural reflection, occasioned by such an exigency, found expression in a closing note of "Baptisma;" that, if immersion were the *only* valid mode of baptism, we were met at the very threshold of the church by an ordinance which, in the case of thousands, would be utterly impracticable. The passage in question is sufficiently explicit. "The fact," it was stated, in immediate connection "in relation to spiritual interests involved is not one of *vital* importance. *Salvation is not a matter of mere ritual.*"

Yet the expression, thus guarded, is charged, by reviewer, with the "*false notion that attributes saving efficacy to the outward rite.*"

Is there anything in the passage quoted to warrant such an inference? The thought at once returns, that, if a sentence sufficiently explicit could be so readily deprived of its obvious meaning and, with such facility, applied in an utterly foreign sense; it must be, in the case of writers to whose works comparatively few have access, an amazingly easy thing to manipulate testimony and to compile chapters from "the most prominent scholars, theologians and commentators the world ever saw."

The implication however does not touch the *primal* difficulty. It does not enable us to harmonize our conceptions of the infinite wisdom of the Head of the Church with the theory, thus strenuously urged,—which, by inevitable sequence, leads us to the startling anomaly, that, of two appointed sacraments of the Church, the one of *initiation* is of such a character as frequently to

prevent possibility of obedience and compliance. This one objection, as the matter stands, is of sufficiently serious and fatal character to invalidate the exclusive claims and assumptions of immersion.

The subject admits of a thoroughly practical and abundantly satisfactory *test*. An adult person connected with church and congregation, an outer court worshipper, "not far from the Kingdom of God," tremblingly and keenly sensitive to the demands and imperative obligations of avowed discipleship, has never reached the decisive point of public profession of faith in Christ. In sickness the consciousness of failure begins to be vividly realized. The merits of the Redeemer are penitentially and believably appropriated; and though disease wastes the body the soul is favored with gracious manifestation. There is a wish to comply with *the Lord's command*—a desire to be baptized *into* the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The case is not solitary and it is not by any means exceptional. *Three such cases occurred, at one charge of mine, within the space of three weeks.*

Immersion in the case of that emaciated sufferer cannot be thought of for one moment. Friends, physicians, and the instincts and impulses of humanity, enter an absolute protest against any proposal to administer baptism by *plunging*. Even, if it were possible and permissible, the agitation, weakness and distress, of the dying candidate, would interfere with all the sacredness, and solemnity of feeling, by which such service should at all times be hallowed.

From such a suffering, dying, believing and hoping disciple of Jesus, a Pastor holding, and hampered by, immersionists tenets, must turn sadly and sorrowfully

away. "Yes," he might say to the anxious inquirer, "baptism is a positive *command* of the Lord Jesus. We are bound by the unqualified terms of the Commission to baptize *all* disciples into the name of Three Persons of the Godhead. But for you it is *too late*. The opportunity for immersion is past. The privilege of being buried with Christ as we preach and as we believe, is gone for ever. It is true you have repented and believed in Jesus. You are saved through the merits of the Cross and Passion of the blessed Redeemer. You have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of your inheritance. But you cannot enter the portals of the Baptist Church. Your name cannot be enrolled amongst the Lord's people:

"Too late, too late, ye cannot enter now."

You will ere long come to the general assembly and church of the first-born; but you will pass through the golden gates, and stand before the eternal throne, *an unbaptized believer*."

No wonder that the most eminent minister of Christ, who has added the lustre of a great name to the Baptist Denomination, when chafed and fretted by the narrowness and exclusiveness of spirit, which had found such exhibition, should indignantly declare: that the "vestibule" of their church was "planted with most *repulsive* forms."

In the administration of baptism, by *effusion*, there is no such experience of difficulty and embarrassment. The nature of the service, in its highest aspect, dedication to God, is explained, prayer is offered. The candidate sweetly composed, and solicitous only for an act of supreme consecration to Jesus, waits in calm expectation. The element of water is applied with the fervent

invocation that simultaneously the promise may be fulfilled: *I will sprinkle clean water on you.* Ordinarily the administration is followed by the sacrament of communion—the elements of the broken body and shed blood of Christ. With memories of the Garden, the Cross, and Sepulchre gathering around us, we hear the Saviour say “*Do this in remembrance of me.*” Even though death should in a few weeks, or days, or still sooner, end the earthly scene and service, the name of that dying *baptized and saved believer* is enrolled in membership; and, through the portals of the earthly sanctuary, the ransomed spirit passes upward to the church in heaven:—

“The holy to the holiest leads.”

Which, then, in view of the emergency indicated, seems to be most in harmony with the dictates of Revelation, reason, and common sense: initiatory ordinance which comes to us in a form that will not *always* admit of compliance? Is it not rather an institution, which being of universal obligation, shapes itself to all the exigencies of human life?

“To apply the waters of baptism to a dying soul implies criminal unbelief in the all-sufficiency of Christ’s atonement.” Was it thus that St. Peter reasoned when Cornelius and his household received the gift of the Holy Ghost? Was not the sufficiency of inward grace, *apart from all other conditions and considerations*, the only argument used for the application of the external rite? Was it not the fulness and blessedness of communication which *alone* prompted the appeal: “who can forbid water that these should not be baptized?”

“Baptism *cannot*,” says Reviewer, “because it need not be administered to a dying soul.” It *need not be!* Upon what valid ground has that affirmation been made?

The opinion of reviewer is lighter than the dust that flits in the brightness of the sunbeam—unless sustained by adequate authority. *It need not be!* Have denominational divines deliberated in solemn conclave and decided that question for the church? *It need not be!* Dispensations and decrees of Papal Rome have challenged cognizance; but Protestants have not been accustomed to pronounce *ex cathedra*. *It need not be!* Something like that dogma has been publicly proclaimed, accompanied by assurance, upon what authority it was not said, that *God takes the will for the deed*. Does not such an assurance directly contravene positive command, and involve therefore serious responsibility? It measures at any rate, to some extent, the extremity to which we are brought by rigid adherence to immersionist theories.

“But who attaches most efficacy to the water,” asks reviewer, “Baptist or Pedo-Baptist?” The only argument used, and evidence adduced, for claiming a verdict favorable to the Baptist is that “immersion *cannot*—because it need not be administered to the dying” believer. Is not that something like making merit of necessity? Is that one consideration, even if greatly meritorious, sufficient to outweigh all the controversy, challenges, heated discussions, wrangling, strife and proselytism, in which zealous adherence to immersion has involved the churches. The experience of years, in combined christian effort, evangelical alliance, the Week of Prayer, Young Men’s Associations, has gone to shew that, almost, the only disturbing element which we have had to dread has grown out of denominational zeal for water. We are asked soberly to forget the “waters of strife” and to remember only that “immersion cannot—because

it need not be administered" to a dying disciple of Jesus.

The first converts, in Apostolic ministration, whenever converted, no matter where, were immediately brought into church-membership. They were at once baptized. But, in consequence of the difficulties of immersion, earnest souls may linger for weeks, and at last expire, without being received as Christ's disciples, and without being permitted to "break bread" in remembrance of Him.

There is a vast difference, between a contention for *mode*, in the administration of baptism, which after all is an incidental thing, and does not touch the spirit of the ordinance—any more than in the solemnization of the Lord's Supper, the validity of which does not depend upon *mode*, whether of kneeling at the communion or sitting in the pew, adopted by the communicants—than the value and prevalence of prayer are determined by the suppliant's *mode* of standing or kneeling—and the plea that Christ's baptismal command is unconditional-ly enjoined, must be universally obligatory.

But there was a still graver "error" to be characterized and condemned by the reviewer of Baptisma. It was wrong, as he believes, to administer baptism to an adult, under the circumstances indicated: but there is the more serious charge of administering infant baptism—"the child was baptized and in an hour or two passed into the spirit world." In what way does that act traverse the letter or the spirit of Christ's universal command? Was it simply prompt observance? If Jesus meant to exclude infants from the commission it was competent for Him to declare his will. *He has not*



*done so*; and we are not disposed to accept the dictum of a denomination as a supplement to the commission.

The reviewer is grieved to find "Christians, who," he thought "had a proper view of the atonement, tainted with error." But what is "precisely the error?" In what way does it dishonor the atonement? Here again the subject cannot be determined by the *ipse dixit* of a reviewer. It admits of exact and ample demonstration. The child that "was baptized and in hour or two passed into the spirit world" was of infinite worth in the sight of God. In virtue of the atoning efficacy of the Saviour's death, and the free gift of righteousness, it was made meet for heaven. Did not the Saviour say, "Of such is the Kingdom of God?" \* Was not that little one though Christ the subject of an "inward grace" of which baptism is but the "outward sign?" Could there be the same infallible certainty in regard to fitness in the reception of any adult candidate for baptism? Is there any entrance into the spiritual kingdom excepting as becoming as that little child? Is it not expedient that church-organization should conform as nearly as possible to divine condition, and thus become a pattern of the heavenly places themselves? If the entrance of any denomination be narrower and more exclusive than the portals of the kingdom of heaven, all the worse for the denomination: But is that sufficient reason for hurling the charge of error in the face of one who seeks to comply, both in spirit and letter, with the express teaching of Christ?

\* Just because every child born into the world has the inward grace through Christ, which by mere nature he cannot have, he is entitled to the *outward sign*. When this doctrine—the doctrine of Fletcher, Fisk and Olin—is properly understood and *felt*, our people will ever be earnest to consecrate their children to God in God's own appointed way.—*Dr. Whedon in Quarterly.*

"For as much then"—the argument of St. Peter applies equally to this case—"as *God gave them the like gift*"—that free gift which in the case of adults, in all its provisions and blessings is conditional upon the exercise of faith,—“as He did unto us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could *withstand* God?”

Implication from fact is followed in “review” by imputation of erroneous doctrine: “the soul-destroying doctrine of baptismal regeneration which crops out in such conduct!” Was it soul-destroying, and a bar to heaven, to administer the sacrament of baptism to the dying members of Christ’s mystical body? The serious charge has been very definitely formulated; and it admits therefore of conclusive answer. The *opportunity*, which might not otherwise have been presented, has been afforded of bringing into clear and distinct outline a fact of ecclesiastical history—which has not yet perhaps obtained sufficient recognition.

It is affirmed that this “error led to the first deviation from the Apostolic immersion”—that the soul-destroying doctrine of “baptismal regeneration” led to the abandonment of immersionist tenets. It is no violation of christian courtesy to stamp that statement as absolutely unhistoric. There is no fact of ecclesiastical history more palpable, than that “baptismal regeneration” was the *active principle* from which delay in baptism, triune immersion, unction, and other extravagances and superstitions flowed as from a common source. The tap-root of error, unquestionably, was the undue importance which came to be attached to mere external rite. The service was magnified by human devices; and

the spirit of ordinance was utterly lost in the letter of observance.

Let the voice of history testify. "The Emperor Constantine," says Eusebius,\* in *Vita Constanti*, "finding his end fast approaching, judged it a fit season for purifying himself from his offences, and *cleansing* his soul from that guilt which in common with other mortals he had contracted, which he believed was to be *effected* by the power of mysterious herbs and the *saving laver*." —*Lib. iv, c. 61.*

"The sacrament of baptism," says Gibbon, who affords unbiased testimony in regard to the prevalent sentiment of the time, "was supposed to contain a full and absolute expiation of sin; and the soul was instantly restored to its original purity, and entitled to the promise of eternal salvation. Among the proselytes to christianity there were many who judged it imprudent to precipitate a salutary rite, which could not be repeated. By the *delay* of their baptism, they could venture freely to indulge their passions in the enjoyments of this world, while they still retained in their own hands the means of a sure and easy absolution."—Vol. 2, p. 362.

"Some of the noblest characters in the christian church," says Dean Stanley, in his *Eastern Church*, "regarded baptism much as the pagans regarded the lustrations and purifications of their own religion, as a complete obliteration and expiation of all former sins; and, therefore, would naturally *defer* the ceremony to the moment when it would include the largest amount of the past and leave the smallest amount of the future."—P. 314.

\* Hall's works, vol. 1, page 318.

The earliest objection to infant baptism, that of *Tertullian*,\* of which ecclesiastical history affords any example, was made purely on the ground of "the soul-destroying doctrine of baptismal regeneration." He believed that the efficacy of baptismal water when once lost could never be fully retrieved; and for prudential reasons, therefore, advised delay—*De Bapt. C.* 18.

Two things are very obvious from the united and unanimous testimony of history:

1. That the earliest objection, of which we have any record, to infant baptism, was the legitimate result of belief in baptismal regeneration. It was not deemed prudent that the efficacy of baptismal water should be spent in infancy. It could, with advantage, be delayed until a late period of life. Experience counselled postponement until there was more sin to wash away.

2. That when other corruptions, especially in the fourth century, came into the church, the superstitious notions and practices of baptismal administration became, at the same time, widely prevalent.

It was not enough to baptize with water, they also added the anointing of oil. They were not content with one application; they introduced the practice of a triune plunge. They were not satisfied with the simplicity of affusion; they adopted the cumbersome but more ceremonious mode of immersion:

"Twixt truth and error there's this difference known,  
Error is fruitful, *truth is only one.*"

\* Wilson, p. 529.

## XV. A MODEL BAPTISM AND MODERN IMMERSION.

"Behold the pattern shewed to thee when God Himself baptized! See that pattern where at Pentecost He baptized His disciples! It was by *affusion* that blessed work was done; and, if thus it is that God baptizeth us, is not this the way in which His ministers should baptize His people."—*Dr. Whedon.*

"It is satisfactory to discover that all attempts made to impose upon christians a practice repulsive to the feelings, dangerous to the health, and offensive to delicacy, is destitute of all scriptural authority, and of really primitive practice."—*Richard Watson.*

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"Would it be *possible* for any Baptist minister to give a *more explicit account* of an immersion than this? Let me now give you an account of a so-called baptism by sprinkling or pouring, as I have witnessed it. After a sermon was preached from the text "The promise is to you and to your children," the parent carried the babe in his arms and stood before the pulpit; the minister, in case of sprinkling, took the bowl in one hand and dipped into it the fingers of the other, thereby lifting a few drops of water and letting them fall upon the forehead of the babe; in case of pouring the minister took a jug and from it poured a little water on the head of the candidate.

The reader can see the comparison, if there be any. To my mind there is none."

Do all modern immersions come within the range of this explicit account?

In the north of England, on the banks of the Tyne, where the earlier years of my life were spent, we had a large number of river immersions; but none of these, as far as we can remember, were of the Baptist faith. They were all Mormonite *dippings*.

From that time, in *fourteen* years, between 1840 and 1854, according to reliable statistics, the Mormonite missionaries immersed *seventy thousand people in England alone.*

The Mormonite preachers called their immersions baptism—spoke of going down into the water, like Philip and the Eunuch: Were they upon that score to be counted as Baptists? Were their *dippings* to be considered as proper immersion? “Would it be *possible*,” to adopt the precise phraseology of the reviewer, “for any Baptist minister to give a more explicit account of an immersion than this?”

“A large and daily increasing sect,” says Dr. Miller, of Princeton College, “has arisen, within a few years, in the bosom of the Baptist denomination which maintains the delusive and destructive doctrine that baptism is regeneration; *that no man can be regenerated who is not immersed*; and that all, without exception, who have a historical faith, and are immersed are, of course, in a state of salvation. This pernicious heresy has been propagated to a melancholy extent, and is supposed to embrace one half the Baptist body in the Western country, besides many in the East.”

“When all the shivering group stood upon the frost-bound shore,” says Dr. Hubbard, page 155, “muffled in their *double envelope*, her slender form exposed to the keen arctic winds, was let down through the ice into the cold liquid element below. She afterwards stood upon the shore, clad in her icy garments, until several more were immersed; and then, with a body benumbed with cold, was conveyed to her chamber, whence, after a few weeks of rapid decline, she was removed to the lonely domicile of the dead. Her friends regarded her death as *the consequence of her exposure at baptism*.” Would it be possible to describe that baptismal service in the same words as Philips?

"River immersions are extremely rare", says Rev. Geo. Turner, writing at Stockport, England, "and yet two cases of drowning are now before the public: one in which the administrator, and one in which the candidate, perished in the water."—*Divine Validity*, p. 63.

Would all such cases be included in the same "explicit" account ?

I have before me an English book, of standard value, in which no less than six ministers mention the *fatal* results of baptism by immersion—one of whom died instantly, and, as their death was attributed, by two physicians, to immersion, a jury, which sat upon the spot, returned a verdict accordingly." The account which such ministers might give would be *explicit*, no doubt, but different from that of the Acts. By way of very special contrast we give that of a Mr. Walker:

"My friend Mr. G., took cold by *immersion*, and was brought into consumption of which he died. I then endeavoured with all my soul to drown my convictions by overpowering the evidence with the advice: We must not say it was so for it will bring a disgrace upon the ways of God. But I have been compelled to alter my opinion and of course my practice."—Thorn 409.

Mr. W. was a Baptist minister ; and this is the "explicit account" which he gives: Conviction of the want of adaptation of immersion to the requirements of baptism, and repugnance to a repetition of similar experiences, led him to renounce his connection with the Baptist Denomination.

It has not been without reluctance of feeling, and a sense of restraint, that these instances have been specified. Only a conviction of the necessity of presenting,

in clear and vivid outline, the whole subject has prompted these paragraphs. The first design was to gather and to group together only recent incidents of local administration. There was a fear, however, that such an exhibit might seem like burlesque of a serious subject; and that sensitive feeling, always to be held sacred, might be wounded in a trace of some recognized incident. The substitution of facts from reliable publications, and only such have been adduced, answers the same purpose. They are not intended for caricature; but to suggest the difficulties of immersion; and, as a mode of administration, *to stamp it as unfit for exclusive observance.*

The "reviewer of baptism" has given us "an account of *so-called baptism*" by sprinkling and pouring. It may be permissible, by way of contrast, to attempt a description of a baptismal administration—by a different mode.

The service to which I refer, is of recent occurrence. the locality of the scene will be sufficiently indicated by a general description.

The candidates, unable to unite in worship, await in a flutter of excitement in an adjoining vestry, in robed readiness for the approaching ceremonial. The officiating minister, after preliminary service, compelled first of all to change his own apparel,—curiosity on the part of the spectators for the most part taking the place of devotion—with a splash descends into the tank, with a grasp, as if in anticipation of violent struggle which not unfrequently ensues, almost as difficult as a gymnastic feat, one which aged and feeble ministers are unable to attempt, the candidates seized by locked hands and neck,



reduced to a posture of helplessness, are *plunged* beneath the water. The same water of the tank, pure or impure, must serve for the several candidates in succession. In this mode of administration the effort of switching and reducing the light and floating drapery to a soaking, sinking condition, forms in many cases a difficult, delicate and dexterous part of the transaction; and which, in the case under consideration, prompted the expression of a wish, the result of pure delicacy of Christian feeling, never again to witness an administration of baptism by immersion. It may be objected that such revulsion of feeling was simply due to inveterate prejudice; but there had been a resolve to stifle, for the moment, preferences for a different mode, and this was simply on the part of cultured, intelligent observation, the expression of uncontrollable conviction.

The several parties in order to escape as speedily as possible from the church and discomfort of dripping apparel, find it necessary, after the plunge, to make a hurried exit; and, notwithstanding the announcement, "Yet there is room," the service comes to an uncereemonious and compulsory close. The theory of immersion, moreover, concentrates all the interest, and all the efficacy of the baptismal service, upon *mode*; and yet, in that *supreme* moment, in which the baptized ones are in contact with the element, they are for the most part only conscious of distress, disturbed feeling, and of violent action. The sensation of shrinking, shiver and shudder, and the gasp as of suffocation, are not unfrequently most perceptible to the audience.

It is scarcely surprising, that, according to a paragraph recently going the round of journalism, a lady of the United States, suffered such revulsion of feeling, from

some ludicrous and untoward incident of her immersion, that she went immediately and united herself with the Presbyterian Church.

Such a case of repugnance and revulsion of feeling is not altogether solitary. In Thorn's "mode of baptism" many such cases are specified: "A gentleman was about to be dipped and join the Baptist communion: but before undergoing the operation himself, he went to witness the immersion of two or three women. The sight and the scenes *disgusted* him. He thought the Saviour could not have enjoined such an indecent rite. He returned, examined the scriptures, altered his mind—and relinquished the honor of being dipped. He is now a respectable minister of the Independent Denomination." P. 376.

The Mennonites, a large and influential denomination of Baptists in Holland, once uncompromising contenders for immersion, perplexed and disgusted by the difficulties and, in some cases, impossibility of the mode, deliberately abandoned it. They decided, as a denomination, to substitute *affusion* for immersion. They still baptize none but adults; but their invariable mode is to *pour* water on the head of the candidate. Commend us to the moderation and common-sense christianity of the Mennonites of the low countries.

There is nothing very objectionable, it must be confessed, in the "case of pouring" as witnessed and described by reviewer. It was evidently a *model baptism*: "the minister took a *jug* and *poured* a little water on the head of the candidates."

For the sake of contrast and comparison, more complete and more suggestive the accessories, which add not a little to the impressiveness of the scene, may be

added ; and then we have, in the description, an ideal and example of simple, sufficient, scriptural, apostolical, New Testament Baptism.

After a service of praise and prayer, suitable selection from the word of God, and a brief exposition of the nature and obligations of the ordinance, the candidates for baptism, and usually those who accompany them in a service of public reception and recognition, of early baptismal dedication, meet their pastor at the communion. Appropriate questions, including as a summary of doctrine, the *Apostle's Creed* are proposed. Amidst hushed stillness of the silent, standing congregation, a pathos which moves every heart, and not a disturbing element or incident to mar the interest of hallowed solemnity, accompanied by invocation for the promised blessing, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you," and for the richer, deeper baptism of the Holy Ghost, the water, by pouring or sprinkling, *falls lightly on the head* of the several candidates ; and tremulous with emotion, the thought, at that moment of supreme interest, goes up to God. They are baptized, *eis to onoma, in the name* of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

The converts,

"All glistening with baptismal dew,"

are then, by the right hand of fellowship, with other candidates, all of whom have been accepted by the united assent of the membership of the Church, cordially welcomed to the communion of saints. In behalf of the whole church, the minister, in that service of baptism and reception can say :

"Welcome from earth : lo, the right hand  
Of fellowship to you we give!  
With open hearts and hands we stand,  
And you in Jesus name receive."—

*Hymn Book, p. 675.*

There is no necessity, as in administration by immersion, for confusion and hurried departure—the discomfort of saturated and dripping garments. The service, in which they continue to the close, to them of unique and memorable interest, deepens and intensifies the feeling of consecrated service. Very frequently an arrangement is made after the service of baptism and reception for the administration of sacramental communion. The elements of the broken body and shed blood are received not only as a *memorial* of the Lord's death, in remembrance of Him; as a covenant-service—a *sacramentum*—pledge of love and loyalty to Jesus; but also as the *badge* of discipleship: shewing “forth the Lord's death till he come.”

Who, that has ever witnessed such baptismal scene and service, has ever failed to receive and retain vivid and permanent impression of genuine simplicity, pervading solemnity, and fitness to all the facts and forms of scriptural teaching and service?

The profound impressiveness of this mode—perfect congruity to the spirit of christianity—absolute consonance to institute ordinance, and imagery or inspired truth—claim and constitute, for the administration of baptism, by *affusion*, the stamp and seal of adaptation for universal adoption and observance.

#### XVI. CLOSE COMMUNION: A COROLLARY.

“What! Commune in both kinds?  
In every kind—  
. . . love, hope, truth, unlimited,  
Nothing kept back.”

—*Eliz. B. Browning.*

"It is sad to see such difference of opinion in the family of God." \*—*Pref. to Review.*

Were immersionist tenets held merely or mainly as matter of theory, or of denominational preference, no strictures upon them would be regarded as either expedient or admissible. Unhappily, however, as a matter of fact, they tend altogether in the direction of exclusiveness and of sectarian narrowness; and, to other churches, like "waters of strife," they are a perpetual source of trouble and dissension.

As a logical consequence, and a disturbing element, agitation concerning close communion has entered into almost all arrangements for union and interdenominational fraternity. On more than one occasion, in recent years, when for some continuous period social and united services for exhortation and testimony and prayer had been accompanied by marked and manifest token of Divine approval and blessing, the desire was expressed for a closing, crowning service of intercommunion. There was a conviction that at the table of the Lord, by common participation of the elements of the broken body and shed blood, in thankful remembrance of His death, members of His mystical body, already greatly blessed, brought nearer to each other in the sacred bonds of christian fellowship, could most impressively and in practical form exhibit their spiritual unity and fundamental belief in "the communion of saints." "But," says Robert Hall, the renowned Baptist preacher and polemic, "they feel no objection to have communion

\* An article in the "Christian Guardian," Toronto, Oct. 15th, 1879, which comes to hand as these lines are written, makes reference to recent expulsion of a prominent Baptist minister and his church from Baptist Association—an incident of "very close communion."

with Pedobaptists in prayer and praise, the most solemn acts of christian worship, even on an occasion immediately connected with the recognition of a religious society; but no sooner does the idea of the Eucharist occur, than it operates like a spell, and all this language is changed and these sentiments vanish. For my part I am utterly at a loss to reconcile these discrepancies."

At the meeting of the Protestant Ecumenical Council, held in New York, 1873, of great and memorable interest, it was asserted by the venerable Dr. Hodge, the Nestor of the Assembly, in a speech upon the Unity of the Church, that denominational churches owed to each other *the duty of intercommunion*—that terms of fellowship were prescribed by Christ and were the same for all christian communities—that no particular church had the right to require any thing as a term of communion which Christ had not made a condition of salvation—that *if men could not alter the conditions of salvation, they could not alter the terms of communion*. The Intercommunion Service, on that occasion, by way of compromise, and in deference to the feeling of weaker brethren, was held in Madison Square Church; but, unquestionably, close communion and restricted sentiment were not the element of the Evangelical Alliance. "In no way" it was claimed by the Dean of Canterbury,—whose beautiful addresses in tender, touching tone, full of earnest emotion and pathos of the most genuine kind was accompanied by an unction of the Holy One—could the communion of saints be better shewn than in the Holy Sacrament: Each might have his own way of celebration; but they shewed the reality of their union by a common participation in the elements of the Redeemer's death. As a confession of faith, at the close of

his address, the Dean recited the Apostle's Creed and was joined in it by the standing congregation. The Rev. Dr. Angus, a distinguished Baptist scholar of the London University—representative of the church of Hall, Spurgeon, and other liberal-mind English Baptists—associated with the Moravian Bishop and other eminent ministers of leading evangelical denominations, took prominent part in the administration of that sacramental service. But the enunciation of fraternal sentiment and that unstricted mingling at the Lord's table were at once followed by emphatic expression of dissatisfaction—from the ranks of close communionists—the only note of discord by which the unity of that Alliance was disturbed. To what adequate cause can such exclusiveness be assigned? What explanation can be afforded of that unlovely, thorny, disputatious spirit which may be encountered at moments the least desirable? To what plausible motive can such palpable violation of New Testament injunction be attributed? The denomination to which this dissonance is due, while nobly holding other essential and evangelical principles, has unfortunately been led to adopt immersionist tenets as a distinguishing badge; and, hence, the vital moment of what under other circumstances might have been deemed a subordinate consideration. The difficulty then which hinders and embarrasses the churches in any attempt at intercommunion, resolves itself mainly into one of mode or condition of baptism. Close communion must be logically regarded as one of the pernicious results of strenuousness, in regard to mere ceremonial; and of a series of assumptions, in regard to baptismal administration, which have no sufficient warrant in the word of God. Even the Baptist Church, if less of stress and

strenuousness were put upon mere form, would be less vulnerable to the organized movement of sects which do not equal her in evangelical enterprise, but which in exclusiveness and aggressiveness of fanatical zeal, for mere rite, take a decidedly advanced position.

"We have endeavoured to shew," says the eminent Baptist Divine, already quoted, in closing his luminous disquisition on *close communion*, "that the system *unchurches* every Pedo-Baptist community." "How is it possible," again he asks, "for principles fraught with such a corollary not to be contemplated with anxiety by our Pedo-baptist brethren: We should not be surprised if other denominations should be tempted to compare us to the Euphratean horsemen in the Apocalypse, who are described as *having tails like scorpions, and with them they did hurt.*"

## XVII. EIRENICON.

"They who have seen the blessed vision of *Unity*, with the prayers of the Saviour breathing through it as the spirit of its life, and the smile of the Father beaming upon it, how can they turn from this to dote upon any thing so shadowy.—*Archdeacon Hare.*

Though compelled, in previous pages, because of the purposes of *proselytism*, to which the subject has been made subservient, to speak *plainly*, this chapter cannot be closed without the expression of an opinion that all the preferences and attachments of the Baptist Churches, and their pastors—if only held in the "bonds of peace," of Christian courtesy and moderation, which the apostle inculcates,—are quite compatible with all conditions and essential requirements of spiritual, fraternal and inter-denominational union and intercourse. Each great ecclesiastical division, Arminian, Anglican, and Presbyterian, has its own cherished traditions.



special mission, and distinctive peculiarities; and why should not Baptist preferences, for immersionist tenets and theories, be suffered quietly to fall into the same place—as matters, *mainly of denominational home life*, and not, of necessity, to be obtruded and agitated as elements of trouble and strife in the churches.

The Creed accepted by all evangelical churches has crystalized the belief of christendom in regard to the Communion of Saints; and the growing intercourse of christian people has developed essential elements of vital spiritual unity, and the possibilities of denominational fraternity, of which until now there has scarcely been sufficient cognizance.

The distinctive attributes of humanity are independent of all arbitrary distinctions. Vocal articulation and the vital forces of life—the heart-throb with its mystic murmurings and the tear that glistens in the eye—are common to all and run along the whole line of our being; and, in the domain of spiritual life, there are affinities and aspirations, the throbbings and deep pulsations of heart and life to that which is heavenly and divine. There are great and essential verities, “the voice of blood more audible than speech,” which indicate relationship, proclaim a blessed brotherhood, and that demand emphatic expression. “Voices like to the music of the spheres may be heard by the ear of faith echoing and re-echoing through the ages the great high-priestly prayer of our Divine Lord:—last uttered in its fulness it may be the last to be answered—That they all may be one; as thou Father art in me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.” \*

\* Dr. E. M. Potter.

May we not be permitted to cherish the hope that in the glow, the earnestness and expansiveness of the Church of Christ in the days which are dawning upon us, fraught with highest promise and glory long delayed, the exclusiveness of mere rite will melt away—that it will give place to purer principle and to nobler catholicity of spirit.

Uniformity does not necessarily constitute, or exhibit the noblest unity. Controlling principle, affording ample sphere for all distinctive preferences, finds expression in the expansive sentiment, the true *Eirenicon* of the Christian Church: "In fundamentals, unity; in matters doubtful, *liberty*; in all things, charity." May the time soon come, when all varied and adverse hues and rays of denominational life, blending and co-mingling in earnest and holy activities, shall be dissolved, by the effulgence of divine manifestation, into soft, pure, white light of spiritual unity—for which the Redeemer prayed "That they all might be *one*!"

Numerous and varied instruments, the choir-song and its accompaniments, the sounding symbol, stringed instruments and the silver of sweet bells, will still be found in God's spiritual temple, but there shall be no voice of discord—not a solitary note of dissonance to mar the unity. Thought and feeling shall beat and thrill in perfect blessed unison. From "the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints," rich in the renewed energy of more than Pentecostal *effusion*, there shall roll up in triumph the exulting, adoring chorus:

*"One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all."*

AMEN.



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